BOLIVAR

THE PASSIONATE WARRIOR

BY T. R. YBARRA

IVES WASHBURN · PUBLISHER · NEW YORK

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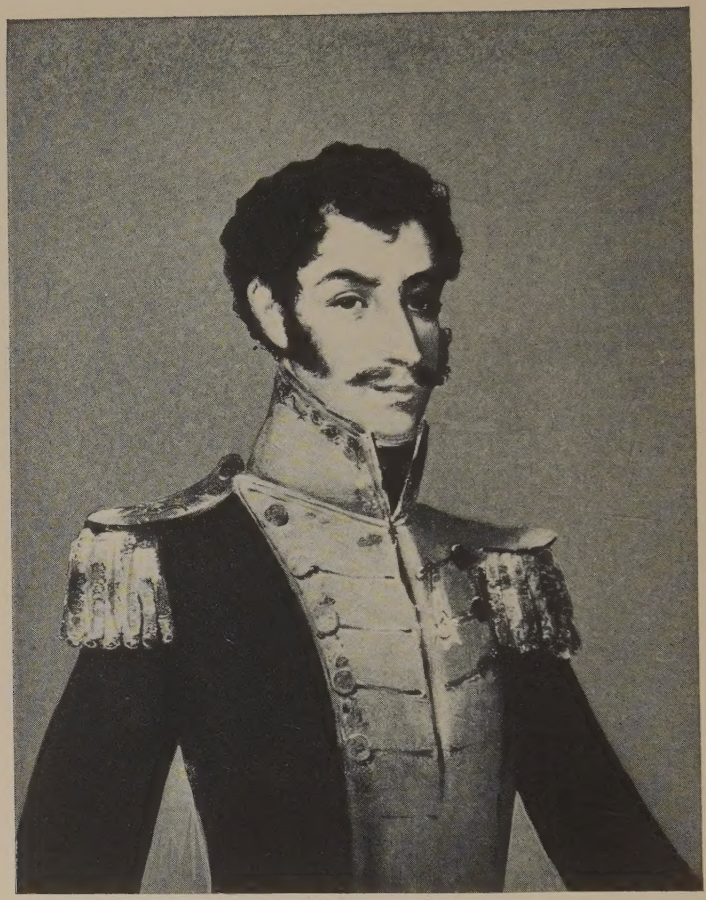

Portrait of Simon Bolívar, which hung in the home at Carácas, Venezuela, of General Alejandro Ybarra, father of the author. After hanging for years in General Ybarra's home, it was presented by the Ybarra family to the Museum at Carácas where it now hangs

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The
PASSIONATE WARRIOR

By
T. R. YBARRA

Illustrated

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To the Memory of
MY FATHER
GENERAL ALEJANDRO YBARRA,
OF CARÁCAS, VENEZUELA,
Bolívar's Birthplace
Whose Grandfather Knew Bolívar;
Whose Father Saw Bolívar;
Who, Himself, Revered Bolívar,
I Dedicate This Book

FOREWORD

On the eve of the hundredth anniversary of the death of Simon Bolívar the Liberator, it seems a pity that his memory should have become dim in the minds of most people in the northern part of the continent which he helped to free. This book is an attempt to freshen that memory.

The aim of the author has been to present him as he was, without unduly enhancing virtues or condoning faults; to show his career and character without distorting them to fit some preconceived notion; to portray them without unduly magnifying any single trait or incident, to the detriment of the whole.

Simon Bolívar's life was short and violent, filled with action, achievement and thrill. Into forty-seven years he crowded enough for a century. The endeavor has been made in these pages to depict this life and, side by side with the narrative, to show what manner of man was he who lived it.

Bolívar accomplished big ends with small means. In none of his battles did the total forces engaged on both sides surpass what we know as an army division. Yet one of those battles freed a country more than twice as big as Germany; another brought independence to a land more than double the size of France; another

wrested from the Spaniards a territory over five times as large as Spain.

It is the stake that counts in a contest, not the number of contestants. How many Spartans barred the Pass of Thermopylæ? How many Massachusetts farmers stood on Lexington Green? With how many companions did Horatius hold the Tiber Bridge?

T. R. Y.

Paris, Summer, 1929.

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PART ONE

UP THE HILL

BOLIVAR

The Passionate Warrior

Chapter I

THE VOW

ON a midsummer day in 1805 two men were climbing the slope of the Aventine Hill, just outside Rome—also called the Monte Sacro, or Holy Hill—the place where, two thousand years before, the "plebs" of ancient Rome had met to assert its rights against the arrogance of the Roman aristocracy.

One of the men, though older by ten or more years than his companion, was still in that time of life when late youth continues to fight for mastery against early middle age. Everything about him betrayed the eccentric—his garments, obviously chosen haphazard and with utter disregard of how they might impress others; his long and unkempt hair; his eyes, the eyes of a fanatic.

The other man was in the full flood-tide of his youth; in fact, not a month had passed since his twenty-second birthday. He was short, slender, nervous of movement. Black eyes, darting penetrating glances, glowed beneath

a crown of jet-black hair. Equally black whiskers, so carefully tended as to betray to the most casual observer the pride with which the youth wore them, were just spreading, in their first bloom, over his cheeks; his feet, as he pushed resolutely up the slope of the Holy Hill, looked so small and neat as to seem more suited to a woman than to a man.

The two men were talking in Spanish, with an accent and intonation which would have proclaimed them at once, to a Spaniard of Spain, as natives of one of the Spanish colonies, far across the sea in America, which the boldness of Christopher Columbus had three hundred years before given to King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella. The older man sprinkled his conversation plentifully with quotations from the Latin and Greek, as became a pedagogue full of learning—for such a pedagogue indeed he was, none other than Don Simon Rodríguez, the eccentric savant of Venezuela in South America, tutor and traveling companion to the young man by his side. He also spouted aphorisms from Jean-Jacques Rousseau, his favorite author, accompanied by bursts of that exuberant gesticulation so characteristic of men with the blood of Spain in them.

The younger man was also animated in word and gesture; only the need to conserve energy for the climb kept him from giving full rein to his native excitability. There seemed to be something on his mind; restlessness and discontent seemed to be tormenting him; it was as if he were pulling against invisible bonds, straining at an invisible chain which kept him from leaping to the accomplishment of some high deed of daring.

Though barely of age he was already a widower.

Sent by his family—rich patricians of noble rank in the city of Carácas, the capital of the Spanish colony of Venezuela—to be educated at Madrid, he had lived there the life of a typical colonial of blue blood and great wealth. He had been presented to the King and Queen of Spain; with gay young "Madrileños" of the nobility he had seen the dawn-light touch the trickling waters of the Manzanares and the bare peaks of the Guadarrama mountains. He had been hand in glove with Mallo—also a Venezuelan, one of the favorites of the frail queen; indeed, gossip had it that once, when the young man was visiting Mallo's quarters, the queen came there disguised as a monk, supped with them, and was escorted by the young colonial back to a hidden door of the royal palace whence she had issued on her nocturnal adventure.

At Madrid the young man had also seen much of other high-born and rich colonials, among them the courtly Don Bernardo Rodríguez del Toro, brother of the Marquis del Toro, one of the leading patricians of Venezuela, and his pretty daughter, Maria Teresa. The youth fell madly in love with her. At first her father scoffed at the idea of marriage—"what?—you not nineteen and she barely sixteen!" But love triumphed in the end; the youth was united to "that flawless gem of inestimable worth," as he called her in an enthusiastic letter to a friend.

Returning to his native Venezuela, they hurried away from the gayety and gossip of Carácas to hide themselves on one of the plantations which formed part of the bridegroom's rich heritage. There, with scores of slaves to do their bidding, fanned by breezes laden

with the scent of the coffee berry, warmed by the fierce sunlight of the south, canopied by the bright stars of the southern heavens, they passed the days of a golden honeymoon. In later years, filled, for that youth, with the fury of battle and the imminent danger of death, poisoned by calumny and the treachery of men whom he deemed friends, he often used to say that those days of passionate love and languorous indifference to all the rest of the world were the only really happy ones in his whole life. And, in truth, after that brief period had closed for him, he was destined never again to know repose of body or soul.

Less than a year after his marriage, Maria Teresa sickened of a fever and died in the arms of her despairing husband and lover. He almost lost his mind from the shock; for weeks he could not rally; for weeks he sat in a stupor of grief, talking wildly of suicide. Relatives and friends tried to rouse him from this deadly inertia; they counseled another journey to Europe; forgetfulness, they said, was to be found in gay Madrid and gayer Paris. At first the despairing young widower would have none of their counsel; life for him was over, he insisted; there was nothing for him to do but follow Maria Teresa to the grave. Finally, however, he began to listen; apathetically, yet attentively, he paid heed to what his friendly counselors had to say. The upshot was that, with his tutor, the eccentric Simon Rodríguez, disciple of Jean-Jacques Rousseau, he boarded one of the sailing vessels which at that time were the only means of conveyance between Spanish America and the mother country, and after a long and stormy voyage landed once more on the soil of Spain.

Again he plunged into gayety at Madrid. But, in the very midst of it, he got a rude reminder of the despotism for which that gayety was a mask. One day policemen stopped him and tried to search him, as if he were a common criminal. The proud youth protested vehemently, but it was no use. "We are obeying orders," was all the explanation to be obtained from the policemen. Later he was told that the reason for the search was that the Queen, suspecting her Venezuelan favorite, Mallo, of another amorous attachment, and knowing his intimacy with his fellow countryman, had thought to find among the latter's belongings some letter that might prove her suspicions to be well-founded.

Whatever the reason for the indignity, it served to show the youth the contempt felt by haughty Spain for colonials, no matter how blue-blooded and rich they might be; and it also served—which was far more important—to strengthen in him a great purpose which had been forming in his brain.

Shaking the dust of Madrid from his feet, he repaired to Paris and plunged anew into dissipation. He went about much in society and met many celebrities, thanks to the letters of introduction which he bore to prominent South American sojourners in the French capital. He drank in with eager eyes and ears the animated scenes and sounds of the Paris of the Napoleonic era. Until then he had been an ardent admirer of Bonaparte; but when the victor of Marengo clothed himself with the autocratic title of Emperor, the young Venezuelan turned in disgust from his idol. An opportunity was offered him to witness the coronation from an excellent point of vantage, but he resolutely refused to be present

and spent the hours during which Bonaparte was being crowned sulking in his Paris lodgings.

He had a long talk with Alexander von Humboldt, the famous German savant, who had visited Venezuela a short time before.

"Is South America ripe for independence from Spain?" the young man eagerly asked.

"Yes," answered Humboldt.

"Is there any man living capable of freeing South America from Spain?"

"No."

Humboldt had proved himself a man of keenest vision in the domain of science; now, however, with that young man from Venezuela standing before him, launching his eager questions, the great German's vision completely failed him.

After Paris, more restlessness, more discontent. "How about a walking tour?" asked Simon Rodríguez, his tutor. Rodríguez, for all his dallying in European capitals, was a man in love with nature, a born wanderer, a scorner of monotony and stability. "I do not wish to be like the trees," he used to say, "which become rooted to one spot and there live and die. I wish, instead, to be like the wind which blows and moves, like water which flows, like the sun spreading abroad rays that give light and heat and life. I wish to be something in which there is evolution, something that vibrates, something that is ceaselessly in motion."

Such sentiments, spouted forth in Rodríguez's exuberant manner, soon had their effect on his pupil. Off they tramped together, through the south of France, over the Alps. They saw Milan, Venice. To Venice the

youth had looked forward all his life with longing. Interest in that fair city, such as most of us feel, had been enhanced in his case by the fact that the name of his native land, Venezuela, is derived from Venice—indeed, it means, in Spanish, "Little Venice." One of the Spanish conquistadores, who were the first Europeans to enter the gulf of Maracaibo, on the northern coast of Venezuela, seeing clusters of native huts built on piles sunk into the shallow waters near the shore, with waterways for streets and boats tied to doorsteps, exclaimed to his comrades: "Look! Little Venice!" Unbeknownst to himself, he thus provided a name for a territory as large as France and Germany rolled into one.

Venice disappointed the young man from its South American namesake; probably the picture of it in his dreams—as in the case of other visitors to the Queen of the Adriatic—was too bright for reality to compete with it. So he and his tutor soon turned their steps southward, until, after seeing Padua and Florence and the hill towns, they plodded into the Holy City.

And now, on that August day in 1805, they stood on the summit of the Holy Hill. Panting, they stopped to gaze at the view. Below them lay the Appian Way, with its rows of monuments to the illustrious dead of ancient Rome, and, towering over all, the fortress-like tomb of Cecilia Metella.

After a few minutes of contemplation, the young man —as if to provide a climax in words for a succession of silent thoughts—suddenly fell on his knees, raised his hand, and, turning to his tutor, exclaimed:

"I swear before you, I swear by the God of my fore-

fathers, I swear by my forefathers, I swear by my native country, that I shall never allow my hands to be idle nor my soul to rest until I have broken the shackles which chain us to Spain!"

The two men embraced in silence, as if to seal the vow. Then they began their descent of the Holy Hill.

Today there is a country named after that young man; provinces and cities, streets and coins, bear his name; scores of children in the United States and elsewhere, born when the whole world rang with his exploits, received his name in baptism. The stepson of George Washington sent him, through Lafayette, a miniature and medallion, which had belonged to his illustrious stepfather, with the request that he keep them in memory of the North American Liberator.

There are statues to that young South American in dozens of South American towns—to say nothing of one in Central Park, New York City—and a frieze, on which he is depicted, in Washington, and a painting of him, presented by his native land to the town in Missouri which took his name for its own.

The splendid monument in the main square (named after him) of Carácas, his birthplace, bears this proud inscription:

"SIMON BOLÍVAR, LIBERATOR OF VENEZUELA, NEW GRANADA, ECUADOR AND PERU, AND FOUNDER OF BOLIVIA."

For Simon Bolívar, the youth who climbed the Holy Hill at Rome on that summer day in 1805, and, kneeling, with upraised hand, vowed himself to the great purpose which through long months had burned within him, kept his vow with noble and unflinching fortitude. He

kept it during twenty years of deadly perils and crushing misfortunes, until, at last, his eyes were dazzled by the flaming sun of victory, and the cheers of millions of his fellow men, to whom he had brought freedom, thundered in his ears.

Chapter II

THE CAPTAIN-GENERAL'S WALKING-STICK

A FEW days after the birth of Simon Bolívar,* which occurred at Carácas, Venezuela, on the twenty-fourth of July, 1783—the year when the struggle for liberty of the thirteen colonies of North America came to an end—he was taken to the parish church to be baptized. At the church the following colloquy is said to have taken place between the baby's godfather and the officiating priest:

"He should receive the name of Santiago," said the godfather, "because he was born on the day of that saint, and, besides, Santiago is the patron saint of Spain and of this city of Carácas."

"No," objected the priest, "he should be named Simon. The Jewish nation was led to freedom by Simon Maccabæus and I have a presentiment that this baby, when he grows up, will be the Simon Maccabæus of his country!"

So Simon it was.

After his vow on the Holy Hill young Bolívar stayed for some time at Rome. There he became the hero of another episode which, even more than his dramatic oath, set tongues to wagging.

* Pronounced with the second syllable strongly accented, thus: Boh-*LEÉ*-vahr.

Under the wing of the Spanish Ambassador, as became a Spanish subject of noble blood, he was received by the Pope. When the pontiff entered the hall of audience, the young South American, at a sign from the Ambassador, dropped to his knees; but when the diplomat whispered that the next item on the program was for him to kiss the cross on the Pope's sandal, Bolívar refused. In vain the Spaniard nodded and pointed; the young man looked stonily in front of him. Fortunately the Pope, sympathetic for some reason with the visitor's reluctance, said gently: "Let the young man from the Indies do as he pleases," and addressed to him some questions about his far-away home and its inhabitants which allayed the embarrassment of the moment. Later, defending himself against the scolding which the Ambassador promptly began as soon as they were out of earshot of the Pope, the young Venezuelan indignantly exclaimed:

"The Holy Father must have little respect for the emblem of his religion if he carries it on his foot!"

Leaving Rome, Bolívar wandered restlessly about Italy for a while. He told his companion, the eccentric Rodríguez, that he wished to return to his native land. Rodríguez refused to go with him; the pedagogue had been mixed up in a plot some years before against the Spanish government and he was afraid that the Spanish authorities in Venezuela might imprison him—nay, shoot him. So he parted from his pupil and resumed his wanderings—afoot, unkempt, disheveled, spouting Jean-Jacques Rousseau. Not for many years—and under circumstances dramatically altered—were the two to meet again.

After Rodríguez had departed, Bolívar returned to Paris. There he spent several more months—restless, dissatisfied, giving way to fits of irascibility, living feverishly, staking big sums of money at cards. A charming Venezuelan kinswoman of his, Fanny Dervieu de Villars, married to a Frenchman, gave him much affectionate counsel. To her he poured out his ambitious dreams, the tale of his travels, his disgust at the transformation of his idol, Bonaparte.

"I used to adore him as the hero of the Republic, as the brilliant star of glory and the genius of liberty!" young Bolívar told Fanny. "I knew of nobody in the past to be compared with him, nor did the future seem to promise his equal. But he made himself emperor and from that day I have looked upon him as a hypocritical tyrant. Ever since, his glory has seemed to me the reflection of the flames of hell!"

Giving full rein to his passion for gambling, Bolívar one night lost such a large sum that he found himself penniless—with a long time to wait before the next remittance from his estates in far-away Venezuela. Swallowing his pride, he told his plight to Fanny. She offered to lend him money to tide him over the emergency. Plunged in shame, he accepted the loan. But he learned his lesson.

"Never," he told his fair kinswoman, "shall I gamble again. Never!—as long as I live!"

At last he decided that the time had come to give up drifting and dissipation, to make his extravagant dreams of South American liberty come true. Bidding an affectionate farewell to his cousin Fanny and the rest of his Paris friends, he set his face westward. Getting from

House where Bolívar was born at Carácas, Venezuela

Room in house where Bolívar was born, showing his bed

Europe to Venezuela was extremely difficult in those days; to reach home he had to go first to the United States and wait there for another ship bound southward. He landed at Boston, visited New York and Philadelphia. Everything he saw in the land which had already wrested freedom from its European masters inspired him with admiration, strengthened his resolve to bring freedom likewise to the South Americans.

After a stay of some weeks in the United States, the young man boarded a vessel at Charleston, South Carolina, bound for Venezuela. He landed at La Guaira, the seaport of his native city of Carácas, in the autumn of 1806. Three years had passed since his beloved Maria Teresa had died and he had gone to Europe seeking solace for his despair.

Bolívar returned to a land ground down, like the rest of Spanish America, under the heel of the most merciless and unenlightened despotism. Spain looked upon her colonies as lands to be exploited, not improved; she bent her every effort toward keeping their inhabitants in subjection and ignorance. To be a "colonial" was a disgrace; the lowest and poorest Spaniard from Spain looked down upon the most aristocratic and wealthy native of Venezuela, Peru, Buenos Aires, Chile or any other part of the Spanish New World.

Even down to the beginning of the nineteenth century there were Spaniards who carried arrogance so far as to declare that the Americans * were not to be con-

* Throughout this book the reader will find that Bolívar and others, when they use the term "Americans" mean inhabitants of any part of the American continent.

sidered human beings but animals. "They are no better than monkeys," said one Spaniard. "I do not know what kind of animals to call them, but some sort of animals they are," wrote another.

From the earliest days of the Spanish Conquest, the Spaniards subordinated all their actions in the New World to the mad search for gold. Men of iron strength and indomitable will power they most certainly were, these conquistadores from Spain, but gold remained from first to last their dream. To govern, to educate, to minister to the progress of the natives whom they enslaved and of the settlers who followed in the trail they blazed, never entered their heads. For gold, and gold only, they fought and starved, thirsted, killed and died. "Valor, patience, and perseverance—avarice, cruelty and perfidy"—these, says one chronicler of South America, were the salient traits of the conquistadores. And their successors after the Conquest followed faithfully in their footsteps.

Venezuela, Bolívar's homeland, yielded little gold—a blessing, in a way, since its poverty in this respect saved it to a considerable extent from rapacious Spanish explorers. Nevertheless, it felt, like all the rest of Spanish America, the hard hand of Spanish rule and the uncompromising narrowness of Spanish bigotry.

Inhabitants of each Spanish colony in America were forbidden to indulge in commerce with foreign countries or with any other Spanish colony. There was no exportation except to Spain; though Spanish America could produce far more than Spain needed, production was ruthlessly throttled to keep it down to the Spanish demand. Civil and military officials only too often gov-

erned without regard to mercy or justice. The colonists were burdened with cruel taxes. Priests ferreted out the slightest traces of heresy. What today would be deemed the most ordinary brand of independent thinking often led in Spanish America to a trial by the Inquisition, and, maybe, to death at the stake.

The importation and printing of books in the colonies was forbidden, unless special permission—very seldom granted—was first obtained. Education was practically non-existent; the most elementary schooling was taboo.

An enlightened native of New Granada (now the Republic of Colombia) bought a printing press in Philadelphia, had it shipped all the way to his native land, and presented it to his native town. The Spanish authorities promptly destroyed it. At Buenos Aires local merchants started a nautical school for teaching young colonials the principles of navigation. The Spaniards closed it. A progressive Paraguayan installed on his estate a grinding-mill for grinding mandioca, one of the principal local products. The Spanish officials forced him to stop. The city of Mérida, in Venezuela, asked permission of the King of Spain to found a university. The King replied: "I do not consider education advisable in America!"

Nobody was allowed to travel in Spanish America without a special royal permit; the penalty of disobedience was death. All vessels not Spanish found navigating in Spanish-American waters, proclaimed a royal decree, were to be treated as enemies.

As early as the beginning of the eighteenth century this régime of oppression had sown discontent among

the colonials. There was a small rebellion in Venezuela as far back as 1731, but it was promptly suppressed. Another, in Peru, captained by Tupac Amaru, a descendant of the ancient Incas whose realm Pizarro had conquered for Spain, met with a most horrible fate. Tupac, defeated and a prisoner, was dragged to the place where he was to be executed; his wife and children were killed before his eyes; his tongue was pulled out; and, finally, having been bound to four horses, these were driven in different directions until his body was torn to pieces. Then his corpse was burned at the stake, his head exposed on a spike, his house razed to the ground, his property confiscated, his descendants branded for all time as pariahs.

Spaniards and Spanish colonials who braved Spain's power fared no better than rebels descended from the ancient owners of South America. They, too, felt the iron hand of Spain whenever they sought to convert their dreams of freedom into realities.

Despite all the horrors that had overtaken earlier lovers of liberty, toward the end of the eighteenth century there were Spanish-Americans willing to risk all in the hope of achieving independence. Among these, members of the upper classes were specially active; they, more than colonials of the lower classes, smarted under the contempt and arrogance of the Spaniards of Spain. Conscious of their blue blood, accustomed on their estates and in their city mansions to the humility of servants and slaves, nothing was more galling to these aristocrats of the New World than to realize that every Spaniard they met, even the humblest—down to petty tradesmen and manual laborers—felt himself superior.

To the Spaniard there were no "hidalgos" among the colonials.

In spite of edicts and punishments, books began to be smuggled in increasing numbers into Spanish America toward the end of the eighteenth century. The revolution of the North American colonies and the French Revolution worked mightily on Spanish-American minds. Volumes by Rousseau and others, preaching the equality of man and the iniquity of the idea of absolute monarchy, dribbled into the ports of the Spanish Main.

In 1799 a revolt was planned in Venezuela by two believers in republicanism, Gual and España. But España was hanged, several of his comrades shot, others, loaded with chains, were sent to Spain. However, cruelty could no longer extinguish the light of liberty. Spain had gone too far in oppressing her colonies; her hour was soon to strike.

By a strange paradox, the cause of South American independence received a decided impetus from the attitude of loyalty toward the mother country adopted by South Americans when Napoleon Bonaparte interfered in Spanish affairs. On May 5, 1808, King Charles IV of Spain signed the Treaty of Bayonne, whereby he ceded to Napoleon his right to the Spanish crown. Napoleon thereupon named his brother Joseph Bonaparte to succeed Charles and poured regiments of French soldiers into Spain. Incensed at Charles's abdication, the Spaniards rose in rebellion against "the royal intruder" as they dubbed Napoleon's brother. At Cádiz an opposition government was set up, which called it-

self the Regency and proclaimed Ferdinand, Charles's son, rightful ruler of the land, under the title of Ferdinand VII.

Murat, at the head of a French army, occupied Madrid, and smothered with terrible severity a revolt of its inhabitants. Hundreds were lined up and shot on the day after the uprising, the bloody Third of May, famed in Spanish history and made doubly famous by Goya's renowned drawings.

Encouraged by England, the Spaniards fought doggedly, determined at any cost to drive Joseph Bonaparte from their country. Meanwhile Joseph and his supporters were trying to get themselves recognized as the legitimate government by the Spanish colonies across the sea. In July, 1808, two French envoys of the Bonapartist régime in Spain arrived in Venezuela demanding recognition of Joseph as King of Spain.

The authorities at Carácas, overawed by mention of the great Napoleon and fearing his wrath, were disposed to grant to brother Joseph the desired recognition. But when this intention was disclosed there was an uproar. A group of leading young men of the city, ardent republicans until then, suddenly leaped into the anomalous position of upholders of Ferdinand VII. Simon Bolívar was one of them.

They demanded that the envoys be thrown into prison. But Don Juan de Casas, the Spanish Captain-General, refused to do this and had the two Frenchmen conveyed under military escort to La Guaira, whence they promptly departed for Europe. The efforts of Bolívar and his companions, however, were by no means sterile. Cowed by their vociferations, the municipal authorities

recognized Ferdinand VII as the rightful heir to the Spanish throne.

Thus far the actions of Bolívar and his clamorous companions were such as befitted loyal Spanish subjects. Already, however, the idea of complete independence for their native land was in the back of their minds. They favored the creation of a Junta to administer the affairs of Venezuela without undue subservience to Spain, which had been thrown into such turmoil by its fight against Joseph Bonaparte that they deemed it could do little to trammel them.

At the country home of young Bolívar, on the shores of the little river Guaire, which waters the beautiful valley of Carácas, there were many meetings, replete with flaming rhetoric. Bolívar himself; the two Montilla brothers; José Félix Ribas, brother of Bolívar's mother —all destined to win renown as Venezuelan patriots— took the lead at these clandestine gatherings.

From the very beginning the Venezuelan agitation against Spain was captained by youths of the highest social rank and greatest wealth. Those who had most to lose cheerfully staked it. Bolívar's family had the right to two titles of nobility—Marquis of Bolívar and Viscount of Cocorote—and he himself enjoyed a yearly income of over twenty thousand dollars, worth enormously more in those days. Many of his fellow plotters were also noblemen rolling in riches. Yet they risked titles, wealth and life in the cause of liberty. From the upper classes of South America, where one might have expected to find the most ardent upholders of monarchy, were recruited the officers who led armies of patriots to victory; among the lower classes, where one

might naturally have sought the bitterest enemies of aristocratic despotism, came, throughout the first years of the struggle for South American independence, the most fanatical adherents of Spain.

In the spring of 1809 a new Captain-General, Don Vicente Emparan, was sent out from Spain to govern Venezuela. Emparan was nobody's fool; behind the protestations of loyalty to Ferdinand VII, which the Carácas Junta and the turbulent youth of Carácas—Bolívar among them—continued to make, the new Spanish governor scented only too plainly the desire for complete independence. He lost no time in snubbing junta and gilded youth, in making it clear that in Venezuela nothing counted but his own will. Relations between Emparan and the budding patriots became strained. Bolívar, for one, received a hint that it might be well for him to leave Carácas for a little vacation on one of his estates. He took the hint.

On the morning of April 19, 1810—the thirty-fifth anniversary of the Battle of Lexington—a group of Carácas extremists bearded Emparan as he was about to attend the Holy Thursday services at the cathedral, and suggested the advisability of forming a new local government for Venezuela. Emparan sought to gain time by saying he would discuss the matter after church. This was not enough for his baiters; they followed him toward the cathedral, passing squarely in front of a company of soldiers, Emparan's guards. The soldiers saluted—a word from the governor would have brought imprisonment to the audacious Venezuelans dogging his steps. But Emparan failed to give that word.

At the door of the cathedral, one of the most radical men in Venezuela, Francisco Salías, suddenly rushed forward, shouting to the governor that it was imperative to form a new government. Carried away by excitement, Salías actually snatched from Emparan's hand his walking-stick, the insignia of his high office.

That act made history in South America. Emparan, now badly flustered, with Salías and other hotheads pushing and gesticulating around him, turned back to the Cabildo, headquarters of the Spanish authorities. As he passed his guards, the soldiers failed to salute. Emparan was done for.

Inside the Cabildo, Salías and those who had come with him from the cathedral, backed now by an even more fiery radical, the priest José Cortés de Madariaga, forced Emparan to give up his post. Then they proceeded to appoint a Junta to replace the ousted Captain-General as the supreme authority in the land.

Thus Venezuela, Simon Bolívar's native land, on the anniversary of Lexington, took the first step in the direction of South American independence. Her example was promptly followed in many other capitals of the Spanish colonies; the flame of freedom leaped to life from the northernmost outpost of Spanish power in America to the southern tip of the continent.

In May, one month later, Buenos Aires formed a republican government; Bogotá followed suit in July, Chile in September. Before the year was out, every colonial capital in Spanish America, except Lima and Guatemala, had chosen for itself a local government and thereby thrown down the gauntlet to Spain.

When young Bolívar, exiled to his hacienda, heard about the happenings on the nineteenth of April, he jumped on a horse and rode at full speed through the night to Carácas. Hastening before the new Junta, he offered his services, reminding the members that, under the Spanish régime, he had received the rank of lieutenant-colonel of the militia of the Valley of Aragua, where some of his estates were situated. The new government gratefully accepted the young man's offer; he was duly taken into the fold, with no definite duties as yet, but garbed with the resounding title of colonel.

He was not of the sort, however, to rest content with strutting around, acknowledging salutes. Realizing the need for prompt and decisive action, he urged upon the infant government the necessity of sending envoys to foreign countries, to explain its position and enlist aid against the wrath of Spain. First of all, urged Bolívar, England must be approached; surely Napoleon's arch-enemy would do something for the rebels.

The Junta objected that it had no money for financing such a mission. "I will pay all the expenses!" was Bolívar's proud answer.

So he and Luis López Méndez, another sprig of Carácas aristocracy, were forthwith appointed envoys of the Carácas Junta to His Britannic Majesty's Government. Off the two youths sailed for London, with a secretary or attaché in the person of Andrés Bello, another young Caraqueño, destined to brilliant literary fame. They sailed on the British war vessel *General Wellington,* obligingly placed at their disposal by Admiral Cochrane, commander of a British naval force hovering about the coast of Spanish America.

At the same time two more Venezuelans were dispatched to solicit aid from the United States. But that country—averse even then to foreign entanglements—turned a cold shoulder upon them.

Bolívar and López Méndez had no better luck. They were well received, to be sure, by the Marquis of Wellesley, the British Premier. Bolívar, throwing to the winds all camouflage of loyalty to Ferdinand VII, told the Briton bluntly that what he was after was the independence of South America from Spain. Wellesley listened with courteous attention. He promised to do what he could. But nothing was done. Although most Englishmen strongly favored the idea of a free South America, the British Government—as is only too often the case with governments—lagged far behind public opinion. In vain Bolívar, going about in society, harangued and gesticulated; in vain he wrote eloquent articles in the *Morning Chronicle*. The British Government would not budge.

So he decided upon a most audacious step. Already he had exceeded the instructions given him by the Carácas Junta; despite their leaning toward an eventual complete break with Spain, they had enjoined upon the fiery youth to continue the pretense of loyalty to Ferdinand VII. But Bolívar, as we have seen, had, in his talk with Wellesley, hit straight from the shoulder on behalf of Venezuelan independence. Now he was resolved upon a second move, which, he guessed, might force those in Carácas to call a spade a spade.

He went to the one Venezuelan in London against whom he had been most eloquently warned by the timid Junta—a veteran soldier of many wars; a man who had

never quibbled about his determination to bring liberty to his native land; a man who had gone from one country to another preaching the gospel of freedom and begging for aid against the Spaniards; a man upon whose head Spain had set a price. To the cautious members of the Carácas Junta the thought of him was a nightmare; once identified with this man, they could no longer pretend loyalty to Ferdinand, nor hope, in case of renewed assertion of Spanish power in Spanish America, to save their skins by reminding Spanish officials of that loyalty.

Simon Bolívar knew this well. But he had no desire to try to save his own skin or that of any other Venezuelan among those who had helped oust Emparan. For him it was independence or nothing. So off he went to the man against whom he had been so urgently warned.

"The moment for action has come!" he said. The other agreed. Abandoning all hope of overcoming British obduracy, the two set sail for their native land—one a mere youth, romantic and headstrong, unversed in war and statesmanship, the other older by a quarter of a century, with hair grayed and features seamed by years of fighting and plotting and seeking to wheedle favors from the ministers of Europe's kings. Anybody seeing the two on that day in 1810, and asked to guess which was destined to greatness would have guessed almost beyond a doubt that fate was reserving its laurels for that older man, grizzled, reserved, noble in brow and carriage, listening gravely to the unbridled utterances of the youth by his side—seemingly no better than the spoutings of a demagogue, a dreamer.

Yes, so most guessers would have guessed.

Chapter III

SECOND FIDDLE

THE man who paced the deck with young Simon Bolívar, as the good ship *Sapphire* cut through the sea on her way to South America, was one of the most picturesque figures in the world of his day.

Francisco de Miranda was his name. Like the ardent, gesticulating youth by his side, he was a native of Carácas. But, whereas young Bolívar was twenty-seven, Miranda was over twice as old in years and infinitely Bolívar's senior in experience of the world and knowledge of the buffets which it was wont to mete out to lovers of liberty.

From his early youth Miranda had vowed himself to the cause of South American independence; nor, while awaiting his chance, did he content himself with the humdrum life of a stay-at-home. Cutting loose from his native Carácas when still in his teens, he received his first military training in the Spanish army. Then he served honorably in North America under Rochambeau when that French general led his regiments to the aid of George Washington. Imbued now with a fanatical desire to bring to his native Venezuela the liberty Washington had bestowed upon the English colonies of North America, Miranda returned to his Venezuelan home and began plotting against its Spanish overlords.

But the time was not yet ripe. He met only hostility and apathy, his machinations were discovered, and he was forced to fly for his life.

Off he went to England, zealous as ever for freedom, to plead with the English for armed aid. But in London, too, there was naught but coldness for him. So, restraining for a while his patriotic ardor, he repaired to the European continent.

There, for years, he led the life of a soldier of fortune, traveling more widely, probably, than any Venezuelan contemporary, never losing an opportunity to beg for help in his ambitious projects. He even got as far as Russia, where his handsome person and great charm gained for him the favor of the amorous Empress Catherine II—an episode which to this day brings malicious satisfaction to Venezuelans. They relate the story with chuckles and winks, feeling that for a Venezuelan of the eighteenth century, one hailing from a land so remote from Europe as to be almost legendary to most Europeans, to have caused a flutter in the heart of a great European ruler, is a feather in the cap of their fatherland. Maybe, even, Miranda tried to get Catherine's aid in the furtherance of his plan to free Venezuela. Color is lent to this supposition by the fact that Spain, the country against which he was constantly plotting, was instrumental in having him expelled from Russia. A pity! Russia meddling in the affairs of South America would have added an odd spice to history!

From Russia Miranda went to Prussia, where he saw the gigantic grenadiers parade before their king at Potsdam. Finally, he turned up in France. The French Revolutionary Wars, then in full blast, gave him prompt

employment and rapid promotion. He found himself, in 1793, in command of the French at the siege of Maastricht and it was he—a Venezuelan!—who led the French left at the battle of Neerwinden. Dumouriez tried to involve Miranda in his treason, but in vain. The Venezuelan, however, was tried. Though he was honorably acquitted, he was, nevertheless, so disgusted with France that he went to England, where he renewed his plotting. Rebuffed again, he took ship for the United States.

There he sought to interest Thomas Jefferson and James Madison in his plans, but they gave him the cold shoulder. At last he found encouragement in the form of private support. Samuel Ogden, a merchant of New York, and others offered to back him in a venture to free his native Venezuela from the Spaniards. They fitted out at their expense the brig *Leander*—(to this day, one finds the name "Leandro," the Spanish form of Leander, in the Miranda family)—and in it Miranda sailed, convoying two small transports and accompanied by a handful of adventurous spirits, nearly all North Americans. Tucked away in the three holds was a goodly supply of arms and ammunition.

They arrived off Ocumare, on the coast of Venezuela, late in March, 1806, expecting to surprise the Spaniards. No such luck! The Spanish Minister at Washington had not been caught napping; getting wind of the expedition, he had apprised his southern colleagues. The daring rebel found them all ready for him. Out they came against him in superior force, engaged Miranda's little flotilla with great vigor, took sixty of his companions prisoner, and sent Miranda himself scuttling away in the *Leander* to the British island of Trinidad.

Among the Spaniards and their sympathizers in Venezuela there was loud rejoicing. Miranda was burnt in effigy and a big price was placed on his head. Ten of the prisoners (eight citizens of the United States) were summarily hanged, and their heads severed from their bodies and exposed on poles in different parts of the country. One of the captives whose life was spared wrote that "the most undaunted resolution was displayed by those sent to execution. No sentiment but that of contempt for their persecutors was perceptible." Venezuela has never forgotten these men. Some years ago a monument was unveiled, with appropriate ceremonies, at Maracay, where they were executed.

Miranda was bitterly disappointed, but there was fight in him yet. Under the eyes (obligingly closed) of the British authorities at Trinidad, he raised another force, sailed back to Venezuela in July, 1806, and captured the important town of Coro in the western part of the land.

Coro, however, was ardently pro-Spanish; its people regarded those who had come to free them with scowling disapproval; the idea of repudiating their liege lord, the King of Spain, which Miranda so ardently pressed upon them, never entered their heads.

"The priests," wrote a member of Miranda's force, "had instructed the inhabitants of this province that it had been invaded by a band of lawless heretïcks and infidels, who came there only to rob them of their property and also to deprive their souls of salvation by spreading damnable tenets and principles among the favorites of the Holy Virgin."

Disheartened by the attitude of the Corianos, Miranda

turned to Sir Eyre Coote, British Governor of Jamaica, and to the admiral commanding the British fleet stationed in the waters north of Venezuela. Both cold-shouldered him; the Corianos grew ever more hostile. So poor Miranda, despairing of interesting them in their own independence, evacuated their town, returned to Trinidad, abandoned further attempts, and sailed away to his old hunting-ground, London.

No sooner had he landed on English soil than he resumed his old plots and dreams. His lodgings, in Grafton Street, off Tottenham Court Road, became the gathering place of a bevy of plotters, both Venezuelans and natives of other disgruntled Spanish colonies. Sitting amid clouds of tobacco smoke, they shouted to each other their harebrained projects, their hatred of Spain, the bright dreams shimmering in their restless brains. There it was that young Bolívar, coming to London in 1810, found the veteran Miranda. The latter was by now well past fifty, scarred by adventure and bowed by disappointment, but within him the love of liberty still burned undimmed.

The elderly adventurer and the youthful enthusiast clasped hands. Within a few weeks they were headed westward again over the Atlantic, in the wake of their dreams. And, as they planned and argued, as they peered into the future, it was always Francisco de Miranda who assumed the lead, as became a man who had caught the amorous glances of an empress, seen Prussian grenadiers parade on the Potsdam drill-ground, fought in France on a par with French generals, commanded his own expedition to liberate his native land. To such as he Simon Bolívar could only play second fiddle—

Miranda was the master, young Simon a mere retainer.

This, though, was only a trick of Fate to test the youth. The best of the plums in Fate's basket were reserved for him; for Miranda there was to be only the bitterest of fruit. Neither, however, guessed this.

Miranda landed at La Guaira, in Venezuela, early in December, 1810. Behind him, unassertive, still humbly scraping second fiddle, trotted young Simon Bolívar.

The veteran lost no time in becoming *persona non grata* among his compatriots. He openly showed his contempt for them, for their lack of knowledge of the complications of war and peace.

The Carácas Junta was still engaged in the inglorious task of carrying water on both shoulders. At one moment it proclaimed loyalty to King Ferdinand VII; the next it flirted coyly with the idea of independence. Not for the Junta a veteran champion of freedom like Miranda, who had never disguised what he was about when assailing Spanish domination; not for it a firebrand like young Simon Bolívar, who had no more intention of remaining a Spanish subject than he had of acknowledging the suzerainty in Venezuela of the Japanese Mikado!

For a while Miranda could accomplish nothing; moreover, his unconcealed contempt for the Venezuelans and his foreign airs made deep inroads on his slender stock of popularity. He surrounded himself with French officers, turned up his nose at native folks and ways and dishes. He asked disdainfully: "Where are the armies which a general of my position can command without compromising his dignity and reputation?" The Venezuelans repaid his hauteur with interest; even

Bolívar, who had revered him, felt a chill of doubt—was his swan a goose, after all? While Miranda strutted about Carácas, sarcastic and aloof, Bolívar, in disgust, retired once more to his country estate.

But events played into the hands of the extremists. Half-hearted though the Junta was, it was altogether too republican for the monarchists of Venezuela. While it was convoking a Congress to meet at Carácas and decide what was to be done, the loyalists of the land hatched a widespread plot against Congress and Junta alike—especially in Coro, which had already spurned Miranda and liberty, in Maracaibo, and in the province of Guayana, bordering the great river Orinoco, where the supporters of the Spanish king were many and active. Just as the Venezuelan Congress, consisting of timorous semi-republicans from the Venezuelan provinces of Carácas, Cumaná, Barinas, Margarita, Barcelona, Mérida and Trujillo, assembled at the capital, with little more definite in mind than embarking upon an orgy of speechifying and theorizing, the news of the big royalist counterplot burst over Carácas and threw the deputies into a panic.

This was water to the mill of demagogues like Miranda and Bolívar. They leaped enthusiastically into the arena. Bolívar, back from sulking on his hacienda, had been attending meetings of the "Sociedad Patriótica," an extremist club, seconding Miranda in attempts to spur enough other Venezuelans to defiance of Spain. At the time Napoleon, having jockeyed the Spanish king into letting Joseph Bonaparte wear the crown of Spain, was trying hard to keep it on Joseph's head.

"What do we care," asked the fiery Simon Bolívar,

"whether Spain sells us, her slaves, to Bonaparte, or keeps us for herself, if we are determined to be free?"

Still the cautious-minded urged calm—but Bolívar angrily waved them away.

"You say that great projects must be prepared with calm, do you?" he exclaimed. "Well, are not three hundred years of calm enough? Do you ask that we should wait calmly for another three hundred? Never! Let us fearlessly lay the foundation stone of South American liberty! To hesitate is to succumb!

"And now," continued the fiery young tribune, "I move that this club embody these sentiments in a resolution and submit it to the Venezuelan Congress!" His eloquence swept away doubts, silenced the advocates of "calm." The resolution was drawn up and dispatched —on July fourth, 1811, the thirty-fifth anniversary of the Declaration of Independence of the North American colonies.

It made an impression—it and the news, constantly more alarming, of royalist counterplotting in Venezuela. Next day, the Venezuelan Declaration of Independence, hastily drafted by a group of extreme republicans, was signed by all but one of the deputies belonging to the Venezuelan Congress. Miranda, as deputy from the town of Pao, was among the signers. Bolívar, not being a member of the Congress—he was still too much a player of second fiddle—did not have the satisfaction of affixing his name to it. But his eloquence at the meetings of the "Sociedad Patriótica" undoubtedly had much to do with this fateful step.

The days of calm had been thrust back among dead yesterdays. The gauntlet had been flung down to Spain

across the sea—to be taken up by her with a grimness and a ferocity that were to bring to Venezuela horror and desolation unspeakable, to thousands and thousands of the Venezuelans—including more than one signer of the Declaration—poverty, suffering and death. For the moment, however, there was only rejoicing. Miranda and Bolívar were beside themselves with elation, on better terms than they had been for weeks.

The hawsers had been cut, the Venezuelan ship of state was swinging out into the stream of history. Old veteran and young visionary smiled at each other. Were their bright dreams coming true?

Much and rough work remained to be done. Royalists in Carácas actually tried to seize the city; only after hot street fighting did Miranda frustrate their audacious coup. Concentrating at Valencia, Venezuela's second city, a hotbed of pro-Spanish sentiment, a much larger body of supporters of the Spanish king prepared to combat the Venezuelan Republic. Freedom, to these men, was abhorrent. Against them Miranda sent a force commanded by an illustrious Carácas blue-blood, the Marquis del Toro, now general in the patriot army, uncle of Bolívar's dead wife—a man who, the irreverent youth used caustically to remark, "deserved better the title of marquis than that of general." Attacking the royalists at La Cabrera, between Carácas and Valencia, the noble don suffered a rude repulse.

There was consternation at Carácas. All turned to Miranda. He consented to take charge of operations.

"But only on condition that Bolívar gets no com-

mand!" was the veteran's ultimatum. Again bad blood had arisen between him and young Simon. Bolívar objected hotly that he was entitled to go as colonel of the militia from Aragua, where his estates were. Miranda, however, was adamant.

"Then I'll go as a common soldier!" shouted the infuriated youth. He was saved from that by the Marquis del Toro, who obligingly took him along as his aide-de-camp.

Miranda captured Valencia. In the fighting Bolívar acquitted himself so well that he won back his rank of colonel.

Meanwhile, at Carácas, the Venezuelan Congress had evolved a project for a Constitution which was a triumph of complication, a child of theory utterly unsuited to the stormy days through which Venezuela was struggling. It laid stress on local provincial autonomy. Executive power, hedged about with all sorts of restrictions, was placed in the hands of a triumvirate. Anything less adapted to meeting a crisis such as confronted Venezuela could scarcely be imagined.

Bolívar promptly ranged himself against this Constitution, thus giving expression for the first time to what was to become one of his cardinal beliefs: that government in South America, to be effective, must be strongly centralized; that federation, though theoretically the perfect form of government, was totally unsuited to South American conditions. This belief he held unimpaired throughout his career, in the face of all sorts of opposition. "In a republic," he used to say, "the executive power must be the stronger because everything tends to undermine it; in a monarchy the legisla-

tive arm must be the stronger, because everything tends toward favoring the monarch."

But there was no real need for Bolívar or anyone else to lose any sleep worrying over that first Venezuelan Constitution. It was not destined to live. The Spaniards were about to attend to that—seconded by an ally more terrible than any human agency from which they might have drawn help.

Holy Thursday. The streets of Carácas, the pious capital of Venezuela, are thronged with "beatas," old ladies whose sole thought is religion. They are garbed wholly in black, their heads are bowed, they carry rosaries between their fingers. Everywhere, also, are pretty misses of the aristocracy, alone or in twos and threes, followed respectfully by the youthful girl-slaves assigned to their personal service. Today, these misses are chary of flirtatious glances, their black mantillas are drawn close around their faces. Men, too, old and young, hasten along the streets—most of them, likewise, have abjured flirtation, postponed until another time the whispering of amorous nothings which they are usually most keen to bestow upon every passing señorita sufficiently endowed with good looks.

Monks and nuns pass, deeply meditating; officers, shorn of swagger; humble members of the lower classes; beggars; slaves. All are bound to one of the many churches of the little city. Through the portals they crowd, into the dark interiors, to dip their fingers in the holy water fonts and drop on their knees in the dark aisles.

Soon every church is filled with worshipers. At the

altars priests chant and bend their heads reverently. Acolytes swing their censers, spreading the odor of incense among the kneeling, praying throngs.

Overhead a cloudless sky smiles benignly. The rays of the westering sun light up steeples and façades. Shadows begin to gather on the great mountain wall which shuts in from the rest of the world the lovely valley of Carácas. Bells toll.

Suddenly there is a strange sound, an inexplicable rumbling, growing ever louder and uncannier—and then the earth begins to shake. Houses topple, roofs crack, great fissures open under foot.

In the churches, after a moment of staring, paralyzed horror, the thousands of worshipers rush for the doors. Rafters crash upon their heads, walls crumble down upon them as they fight and claw their way toward the open. Hundreds never reach the street; they are struck down by collapsing stonework or trampled to death in the struggle to reach safety.

Other hundreds perish in their homes; still more, bereft of their senses, dash into the streets, only to dash back again indoors, to be entombed there by falling beams and masonry. Many more, having managed to get to the street, are crushed by walls falling outward. In the open squares, crowds of people, many maimed and bleeding, drop to their knees, lift their hands to heaven, beg frantically for divine mercy.

"The Judgment of God!" shout wild-eyed priests—adherents, to a man, of the Spanish king, bitter foes of the budding liberty of Venezuela. "The Judgment of God!" Holding aloft crucifixes, pushing their way into the cowering crowds, they begin fervid harangues.

"The Judgment of God! Two years ago, at this very time, Carácas drove away the representatives of His Holy Majesty, the King of Spain! Ever since, Carácas has flouted his royal authority and spat upon his servants and worked impiously for separation from the mother country! Down on your knees, Caraqueños! Faces into the dust! Pray for mercy! The Judgment of God! The Judgment of God!"

The terror-stricken multitude, groveling amid ruined homes and bloodstained corpses, gibber and moan agonized prayers for forgiveness.

Simon Bolívar, recovered from the first terrible shock of the earthquake, hurries from place to place, noting everywhere the heaps of dead—noting also the priests cursing Venezuelan freedom amid the weeping, trembling crowds. In a fury of patriotism, he advances upon one astonished padre and bids him hold his tongue. The priest, also a man of spirit, flings haughty words of refusal at the young man. Bolívar, beside himself with rage, draws his sword and makes a rush at the other. But the padre, gathering up the vestments hampering his feet, scurries away without offering further argument. Sheathing his sword, the young republican turns to helping the injured. He gathers around him other willing helpers, issues orders, commandeers stretchers.

"It is the Judgment of God!" whimper terrified men and women around him. "Let us acknowledge our King! Down with the Republic. The Judgment of God!"

Hearing these words, Bolívar's rage returns upon him. Shaking his fist at those nearest him, he shouts, in maniacal exasperation:

"If Nature opposes us, we will fight her!—and make her obey us!"

The shaking earth is quiet at last. Night falls over the city of Carácas. It is a heap of blood-spattered ruins. The survivors are huddled on streets and public squares, shrinking, in terror, from entering their shattered homes. Groups of courageous men, Bolívar among them, supervise the preparation of huge bonfires—there is no time to be lost burying the dead. Dead bodies lie everywhere, in the open, under broken walls—in the churches, especially. They must be burned or pestilence will be added to the city's woes. Restlessly Bolívar and the others direct the quest for the victims, the heaping of their corpses on the funeral pyres. There are twelve thousand corpses.

Chapter IV

MIRANDA'S STAR SETS

AFTER the terrible earthquake, by which not alone Carácas but many other Venezuelan towns were laid in ruins, the Spaniards bestirred themselves. A former officer in the Spanish navy, Domingo Monteverde by name, who had landed at Coro and offered his services to the Spanish Captain-General Miyares, and to Ceballos, Spanish commander at that place, was entrusted with the leadership of an expedition designed to defeat Miranda and reëstablish the authority of the King of Spain throughout Venezuela.

Advancing rapidly eastward, Monteverde occupied Barquisimeto, which had been destroyed by the earthquake. Out of the ruins of the barracks, where hundreds of rebel soldiers had been entombed, Monteverde's men dug several cannon; they also found considerable stores of arms, munitions and supplies. Filled with confidence, they moved against Valencia, well knowing that town to be filled with royalist sympathizers who, convinced that the earthquake was a sign of God's wrath against the rebels, would be only too eager to welcome, house, feed and arm the soldiers of the King.

Monteverde marched into Valencia on May 3, 1812. All along his path from Coro he had let his men kill and rob as they pleased—there was nothing squeamish about Don Domingo Monteverde.

Miranda fell back to the strong position of La Cabrera, between Valencia and Carácas, where the noble Marquis del Toro had suffered his little contretemps a short time before. From now on all strength and resolution seemed to desert Miranda; he hesitated, remained inert when he should have struck with decision. Though he had seven thousand men, a larger force than Monteverde's, he kept them inactive. Undisciplined they were, to be sure, and shaken in spirit by the awful shock of the earthquake, yet an energetic commander would have found means to dissipate their nervousness and whip them into real soldiers.

Not so Miranda. His star was rapidly setting. The shades of the prison-house were already closing around him.

Monteverde attacked La Cabrera and was repulsed. Yet Miranda failed to pursue him. Then Monteverde's army, led by a deserter from Miranda's forces, crept over a little-known pathway and got in Miranda's rear, forcing the Venezuelan to fall back on La Victoria, a strong position, the key to Carácas. Monteverde advanced cautiously; he was outnumbered and he knew it. Chafing at their leader's inactivity, many officers in Miranda's forces begged him to attack the Spaniard, to stake everything on one bold throw. But Miranda, in a very palsy of indecision, did nothing.

Meanwhile, Bolívar and he had fallen out again. Instead of letting his ardent subordinate take a hand in the main struggle, Miranda coldly relegated him to command at Puerto Cabello, the seaport of Valencia, far from the scene of hostilities. At Puerto Cabello there

MAP SHOWING THE
NTRIES OF SOUTH AMERICA
LIBERATED BY
SIMON BOLIVAR
and which were the scene
of his campaigns.
Scale of Miles
Scale of Kilometers
CARIBBEAN SEA
ATLANTIC OCEAN
PACIFIC OCEAN
VENEZUELA
COLOMBIA
(NEW GRENADA)
ECUADOR
PERU
BRAZIL
BOLIVIA
CHILE
ARGENTINE
PARAGUAY
BOGOTA
QUITO
LIMA
CARACAS
MARACAIBO
CARTAGENA
Santa Marta
Rio Hacha
Barranquilla
Cienaga
Manaos
Matto Grasso
Trinidad
Cuzco
Arequipa
Puno
LAKE TITICACA
LA PAZ
Sicasica
Cochabama
Oruro
Lake Poopo
SUCRE
(Chuquisaca)
Potosi
Tacna
Tarapaca
IQUIQUE
ANTOFOGASTA
TROPIC OF CAPRICORN
Callao
Huancavelica
Huanca
Ayacucho
Albancai
Pisco Bay
CERRO DE PASCO
Junin
Huaura
Canta
Trujillo
Chiclayo
Piura
Paita
Tumbez
Loja
Cuenca
Guayaquil
Gulf of Guayaquil
Riobamba
Chimborazo Vol
Cotopaxi Vol
Ibarra
Pichincha Vol
Esmeraldas
Bambona
Pasto
Tuquerres
Ipiales
Popoyan
Cali
Buenaventura
Chaco Bay
Pta Reyes
Buenaventura
Bogota
Purificacion
Neiva
Honda
Girardot
Ocaña
Cucuta
San Jose de Cucuta
Rosario
Pamplona
Merida
Trujillo
Barquisimeto
Valencia
Puerto Cabello
La Guaira
Barcelona
Cumana
Port of Spain
Trinidad
Tobago
Barbados
Grenadines
Grenada
Maturin
Araguas
Calabozo
Sombrero
San Carlos
Santa Ana
Guanare
Barinas
Barinas
Acnaguas
San Fernando
Calcara
Angostura
(Ciudad Bolivar)
Upata
San Diego
Orinoco River
Delta
Llanos
Arauca
Guadalito
Casanare
Rio Chire
Pore
Tunja
Socorro
Velez
Giron
Bucaramanga
Pamplona
Rosario
Ocana
Tamalameque
Chiriguana
Mompox
Plato
Tenerife
Barranquilla
Sabanilla
Rio Hacha
Santa Marta
Cienaga
Manaos
Rio Negro
Amazon
Madeira
Purus
Javary
Iquitos
Maranon
Ucayali
Pachitea
Pozuzo
Huallaga
Mayobamba
Moyobamba
Jaen
Sana
Lambeyeque
Trujillo
Virn
Sana
Nepena
Casma
Guarmey
Huaura
Canta
Junin
Callao
Lima
Huancavelica
Huanca
Ayacucho
Albancai
Pisco Bay
Cuzco
Arequipa
Puno
Chucuito
Lake Titicaca
La Paz
Sicasica
Cochabama
Oruro
Lake Poopo
Sucre
(Chuquisaca)
Potosi
Porco
Tacna
Tarapaca
Iquique
Antofogasta
Tropic of Capricorn
Pilcomayo R
Bermejo
Paraguay
Matto Grasso
Trinidad
Guapore
Madeira
Purus
Javary
Iquitos
Maranon
Ucayali
Pachitea
Pozuzo
Huallaga
Rio Negro
Amazon
Manaos
Coquetta
Caqueta
Putumayo
Napo
Tigre
Pastaza
Morona
Santiago
Zamora
Chinchipe
Puyango
Tumbez
Loja
Cuenca
Guayaquil
Gulf of Guayaquil
Riobamba
Chimborazo Vol
Cotopaxi Vol
Ibarra
Pichincha Vol
Esmeraldas
Bambona
Pasto
Tuquerres
Ipiales
Popoyan
Cali
Buenaventura
Chaco Bay
Pta Reyes
Bogota
Purificacion
Neiva
Honda
Girardot
Ocaña
Cucuta
San Jose de Cucuta
Rosario
Pamplona
Merida
Trujillo
Barquisimeto
Valencia
Puerto Cabello
La Guaira
Barcelona
Cumana
Port of Spain
Trinidad
Tobago
Barbados
Grenadines
Grenada
Maturin
Araguas
Calabozo
Sombrero
San Carlos
Santa Ana
Guanare
Barinas
Barinas
Acnaguas
San Fernando
Calcara
Angostura
(Ciudad Bolivar)
Upata
San Diego
Orinoco River
Delta
Llanos
Arauca
Guadalito
Casanare
Rio Chire
Pore
Tunja
Socorro
Velez
Giron
Bucaramanga
Pamplona
Rosario
Ocana
Tamalameque
Chiriguana
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Barranquilla
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Matto Grasso
Trinidad
Guapore

was nothing to do but kick one's heels and mount guard over the numerous Spanish prisoners confined in the great fortress dominating the town. No job, that, for Simon Bolívar! He took it over without making the slightest attempt to conceal his ill-humor.

Soon after he had assumed command there was a sudden puff of smoke from the walls of the fortress. Cannon balls began to fall in the town. What could it mean? Rushing to a point of vantage, Bolívar descried men scurrying about the ramparts, manning the guns, and prisoners pouring from the stairways leading to the dungeons.

Then he understood all. The officers in charge of the fort had turned traitor. They had freed the prisoners and were bombarding the town, which lay at their mercy.

To try to hold the place with the fort in the enemy's hands was useless. Bolívar tarried a while, hoping to be reinforced. But the bombardment grew worse. Finally, accompanied by a handful of his men, he slunk into a small vessel, which was towed silently, under cover of night, past the fort. Once in open water, sail was set and the vessel sped toward La Guaira.

Bolívar was plunged in the deepest despair. In an agony of self-reproach, he wrote to Miranda: "General, my native land has come to perdition in my hands! I am in such a state of depression that I do not feel capable of commanding a single soldier. I beg of you either to place me under the orders of an officer of the lowest rank, or else grant me a few days to pull myself together, and recover my serenity which I lost when I lost Puerto Cabello. Moreover, there is my physical

health to consider, for, after thirteen nights without sleep and replete with the most serious worries, I find myself in a sort of insanity."

Seldom if ever in his adventurous life did he yield to such despair—certainly not in the opening years of his career. If the feelings prompting this letter had been typical of the man, he would never have become Simon Bolívar, the Liberator.

When Miranda heard from his subordinate the news of the fall of Puerto Cabello, he turned to the officers about him and said, "Venezuela has been wounded to the heart." So great was the shock to him that he resolved upon a course which was a fitting culmination for the weeks of inertia through which he had passed.

He proposed an armistice to Monteverde. Would the Spanish commander guarantee to his foes their lives and property and, to Venezuela, the enjoyment of the liberal constitution just promulgated in Spain?

Monteverde consented. Miranda's officers were furious. All sorts of reports uncomplimentary to the commander-in-chief began to fly about; there was talk that he had been moved to his decision by the offer, from Spaniards in Carácas, of a sum of money sufficient to support him in exile. Leaving behind him his discontented army, Miranda hastened from La Victoria to Carácas, whence he repaired to the seaport of La Guaira, proposing to take ship there and shake the dust of Venezuela from his feet forevermore.

He reached La Guaira without mishap; but beyond that port he was not destined to go as a free man.

Bolívar, who had arrived shortly before from Puerto Cabello, was furious when he learned of Miranda's

proposed departure. Why was he leaving? If the Venezuelan commander-in-chief believed that Monteverde would fulfill the terms of the armistice, he need be in no fear. On the other hand, if he believed Monteverde would violate them and lay hands on the officers lately in rebellion against Spain, it was a cowardly act for Miranda to leave his army at the Spaniard's mercy. Moreover, Bolívar, like so many others, believed that Miranda should have attacked and defeated Monteverde; his weeks of inactivity in the face of the foe seemed criminal. Then, also, there was the personal animosity between Bolívar and Miranda. Actuated by a mixture of motives, all hostile to his chief, the fiery youth decided that the veteran must not only be kept from leaving the country but also tried and executed.

At La Guaira, Bolívar and Miranda dined together —Casas, military commander of the port was also there, and Peña, the civil governor. Miranda, weary and dispirited, soon excused himself—he needed sleep, he said, because he must rise early in order to go aboard the vessel which was to take him to foreign shores. When he had gone, Casas, Peña, Bolívar and a few more put their heads together. Miranda must not be allowed to go!

Their minds made up, they repaired in a body to the door of the room in which the beaten commander was sleeping. It was unlocked. They entered.

"Surely it is not time to get up," said a sleepy voice. Standing about the bed, they bade Miranda dress and follow them. The veteran sat up in bed, rubbing his eyes, looking in bewilderment at the group around him. They told him he was a prisoner. In silence he eyed them;

then, with a shrug of his shoulders, he got out of bed and put on his clothes, while they surrounded him, with set lips and unfriendly eyes.

They signed to him to follow them. He obeyed. At the little fort of San Carlos they ordered the officer in charge to lock him up.

Nevermore, in the years of life remaining to him, was Francisco de Miranda to breathe the air of freedom. Early next morning peremptory orders arrived from Monteverde, who had meanwhile reached Carácas, that nobody was to be allowed to embark from La Guaira. News also came of wholesale arrests of patriots in Carácas; the Spaniard was treating the armistice like a worthless scrap of paper.

Casas, the military commander at La Guaira, was in a panic. How expect favor from the Spanish general if he should inform Monteverde that he had been involved in shooting Miranda because the latter had betrayed the cause of Monteverde's foes? Would it not be better to turn over the unfortunate leader to Monteverde and thus curry favor? Casas did not hesitate long—he surrendered Miranda to Monteverde.

Ignoring his promises, Monteverde loaded his enemy with chains. After weary months of imprisonment at La Guaira and Puerto Cabello, and in Puerto Rico, the luckless veteran was sent to Cádiz, in Spain, where, chained to the wall like a dog, he finally succumbed in 1816. A miserable end, indeed, for a man seemingly destined to great achievement and bright fame.

Bolívar has been accused of helping turn Miranda over to the Spaniards in order to save his own skin; but the evidence supporting the charge is flimsy and gained

undeserved importance in later years among enemies willing to employ any weapon to discredit him.

To the end of his days Bolívar insisted that what he had wanted was to have his former commander shot as a traitor, that only the action of Casa prevented Miranda from facing a firing squad the morning after his arrest. There is excellent evidence to support the truth of this assertion. When General O'Leary, Bolívar's aide-de-camp for many years, and the author of the first and one of the best of Bolívar biographies, was collecting data for his work after his chief's death, he obtained the following narrative from General Pedro Briceño Méndez, who had campaigned with Miranda, concerning Bolívar's action on the fateful night at La Guaira when Miranda was arrested:

"Hardly had Bolívar reached Carácas on his way to the headquarters of the Dictator [Miranda] than he heard of the capitulation of the latter, by which he had turned over the country to the enemy. Determined not to submit to it, Bolívar decided to emigrate to foreign parts. He reached La Guaira with this end in view, in company with a large number of officers with a like intention who, following the example of the Dictator, were unwilling to await the consequences which the capitulation might bring. But when these men tried to embark, they were told that only Miranda could do so. Bolívar, angry at this new mark of treason, conferred with Colonel Mires and Colonel Miguel Carabaño, and with Major Tomás Montilla and other officers implicated in the rebellion, as to how they might save themselves. Having decided that the only way was to arrest the Dictator and punish him for his treason, they went be-

fore the military commander of the place (at that time Colonel Manuel M. Casas) who consented to what they proposed and gave Colonel Bolívar orders to effect the arrest. Bolívar, accompanied by the above-named officers, arrested Miranda and turned him over to the military commander of La Guaira during the night . . . and they resolved to defer the capital punishment which they intended to visit upon him until the next day.

"There was no execution, however, for it seems that Colonel Casas received orders or reports from Carácas which caused him to fear the vengeance of the Spaniards, already victorious; Casas also opposed the embarkation of Bolívar and his comrades, for which reason they all fell into the hands of the enemy.

"Bolívar has been accused of having arrested Miranda to ingratiate himself with the Spaniards and obtain pardon for himself at the cost of his commander's life, but the truth is that his sole object was to avenge his country and avenge himself for being detained and exposed to becoming a victim of the Spaniards.

"I have been assured of the above by the officers with whom Bolívar made his plan. The truth of these statements is corroborated furthermore by the resentment felt by Bolívar for a long time against Casas because the latter failed to carry out what had been planned, thus making it possible for the enemy to lay hands on the Dictator and on those who had placed him under arrest."

In his quest for biographical material O'Leary also obtained valuable data from Colonel Robert Belford Wilson, an Englishman, for years one of Bolívar's favorite aides. Writing from London shortly after Bo-

Statue of Simon Bolívar in Plaza Bolívar, the main square of Carácas, Venezuela. The house where he was born is three blocks away

lívar's death in 1830, when O'Leary was preparing the biography of his chief, Wilson said:

"Are you thoroughly acquainted with his motives respecting the arrest of General Miranda? To the last hour of his life he rejoiced of that event, which, he always asserted, was solely his own act, to punish the *treachery and treason* of Miranda in capitulating to an inferior force and then intending to embark himself, knowing the capitulation would not be observed. . . .

"General Bolívar always *gloried to me* in having risked his own safety, which he might have secured by embarking on board a vessel, in order to secure the punishment of Miranda's alleged treason. His plea was not altogether ill-founded, for he argued that, if Miranda believed the Spaniards would observe the treaty, he would have remained to keep them to their word; if he did not, he was a traitor to have sacrificed his army to it. General Bolívar invariably added that he wished to shoot Miranda as a traitor and was withheld by others."

Whatever the exact nature and sequence of the events leading up to Miranda's arrest, Bolívar's own position after it was most undignified. He managed to get to Carácas, where he remained in hiding for a time until a friend, Don Francisco Iturbe, who stood excellently with the Spaniards, promised to aid him in getting a passport to leave the country.

Under the wing of Iturbe, Bolívar presented himself before the victorious Monteverde. Here is what happened—again according to Colonel Robert Belford Wilson, who wrote to O'Leary after Bolívar's death:

"When presented to Monteverde, he said to General Bolívar:

" 'You have done the King a great service in arresting that traitor, Miranda.' General Bolívar exclaimed: 'What, I? Is Your Excellency making fun of me? I arrested him in order to punish a scoundrel who had betrayed his country!' "

The colloquy between Bolívar and the Spanish commander is described in almost identical terms by one of the best-known biographers of Bolívar, the Venezuelan Felipe Larrazábal, who heard it from Iturbe himself.

The young man's daring almost caused him serious trouble. Monteverde, enraged at his presumption, was for refusing him a passport. But Iturbe interposed and finally succeeded in smoothing the Spaniard's ruffled feelings. One reason, doubtless, for Monteverde's change of mind was the insignificance of Bolívar, who was still very much of a player of second fiddle in Venezuelan affairs.

Bolívar got his passport. It enabled him to board a vessel bound for the island of Curaçao, off the coast of Venezuela, then under British rule. Owing to an irregularity in the vessel's papers, the young man's baggage, containing a large amount of ready money, was seized by the British authorities. Monteverde, shortly before, had confiscated every bit of property remaining to him in Venezuela. So he found himself an exile, on foreign soil, with scarcely a penny in his pockets.

But he refused to let that discourage him. Already new plans were simmering in his brain for freeing his native land and neighboring lands groaning, like Venezuela, under the yoke of the Spaniards.

Venezuela was closed to him, but—what about New

Granada, the next Spanish colony to the westward? At Bogotá, its capital, patriotic inhabitants had rebelled some time before, as at Carácas, against their foreign masters. And at Cartagena, the old walled seaport town, fronting the Caribbean Sea, famous since the earliest days of the Spanish régime, replete with memories of conquistadores and buccaneers, there was also a revolutionary government openly defying the Spanish king.

Cartagena is not far from Curaçao. Instead of continuing to enjoy the safety afforded him by the little British island, a safety purchased by him at such a risk, Simon Bolívar began laying plans to get back to the South American mainland.

Surely, at Cartagena, he would find employment among the defiers of Spain. Maybe, even, he could get the rebels there to listen to the ambitious projects coursing through his busy brain.

With borrowed funds in his pocket, he stepped aboard a vessel bound for the mainland. With him went a few other Venezuelans, among them his uncle, José Félix Ribas, as ardent a hater of Spain as himself—a man whose love of liberty made him wear a little red "Phrygian" cap, such as had been used by those who ended royal rule in France in the days of the French Revolution.

Forward to Cartagena!

Chapter V

BOLÍVAR'S STAR RISES

NO more second fiddle! From the moment of his setting foot again on the soil of South America, at Cartagena, a new Simon Bolívar, the real Simon Bolívar, leaps into being. A leader of men. A diplomat, where soft words are needed. A scoffer at tradition. A man lusting to bend fellow men and happenings to his imperious will, mold them into instruments for the realization of his soaring ambitions. A dominator.

No more second fiddle! Gone are the days of looking up in reverence to Francisco de Miranda. No more looking up to anyone! Young Simon Bolívar feels himself on the threshold of renown. The "youth already known for his unbearable vanity and unbounded ambition" —as a pro-Spanish resident of Carácas has dubbed him —is about to cut his name deep into history.

No more second fiddle! He is an exile, penniless, unknown, a stranger in a strange land, a mere Venezuelan officer, fresh from defeat. What of it! Scarcely has he found lodging in Cartagena before he calls for pen and paper and starts composing that delight of Latin-Americans, a manifesto. "From the Venezuelan Colonel, Simon Bolívar, to the People of Cartagena!"

From his pen rush, full fledged, theories of govern-

ment, plans of campaign, visions of a free South America with never a Spanish flag to mar its freedom. Simon Bolívar, the lifelong dreamer, has hit upon the first words with which to paint the dreams inspiring and torturing his active brain.

In a foaming torrent of eloquence, he tells the people of Cartagena, themselves in revolt against Spain, of the mistakes made by Miranda and others in Venezuela—lest Republican New Granada and Cartagena collapse, like his own country, at the very outset of the fight for independence. No more leniency! Away with mercy! No half-measures! War! To the knife! Cartagena and New Granada must help reconquer Bolívar's homeland from Spain!

"The worst error committed by Venezuela when she appeared on the political stage"—so Bolívar writes—"was beyond a doubt her ill-starred adoption of a policy of toleration." Then he sets down the ideas, already crystallizing in his mind, of what sort of government the rebellious colonies of Spanish America must set up if they are to become independent—a very different sort of government from that which, in Bolívar's opinion, contributed materially toward the downfall of the first Venezuelan Republic— (Oh, that poor first Venezuelan Congress, with its voluble deputies from backwoods towns, slaves of half-baked ideas—oh, the speechifying and theorizing! Bolívar gnashes his teeth at the memory!) And his rapid pen goes scratching over the paper:

"The systems adopted by our legislators were not such as might teach them the practical science of government, but systems evolved by certain worthy vision-

aries who, imagining aërial republics, have sought political freedom in the belief that the human race is capable of becoming perfect. That was why we had philosophers for leaders, philanthropists for legislators, dialectics instead of tactics, sophists instead of soldiers. Under the shelter of such pious doctrines, every conspiracy brought a pardon, every pardon another conspiracy, which, in its turn, was pardoned! . . . Criminal indeed, this mercifulness, which contributed more than anything else toward wrecking the machine not as yet completed by us!"

Ever angrier his memories of the past months of disappointment and humiliation make him, ever more rapidly his pen rushes over the sheets of paper. He remembers the antipathy of the civilian deputies at Carácas to the army—the old democratic fear! Bolívar, budding apostle of centralized government, destined to spend the rest of his life leading soldiers and fighting battles, has no patience with such timidity. A democrat he is, deep down in his heart, a believer in the supremacy of the people, but—just around the corner are the Spaniards, ready to pounce—the Spaniards, cruel, valiant and strong! No time, this, for Utopian democracies, for governments composed of neat balancings and checks and counterchecks!

Strength! Power! A free field for men of iron courage! Action! Bolivar's pen is now scratching its way across the sheets in a frenzy of speed:

" 'Republics,' said our statesmen, 'need no paid soldiers to maintain their liberty. All the citizens will become soldiers when the enemy attacks us. Greece, Rome, Venice, Genoa, Switzerland, Holland, and, recently,

North America, beat their foes without the aid of mercenary troops, always ready to support despotism and subjugate their fellow citizens.'

"With such anti-political and false reasoning our statesmen fascinated the simple-minded, but failed to convince the thinkers, aware of the immense difference between different nations and epochs, between the customs in those republics and in ours. The former, to be sure, paid no standing armies, but the reason for this was that, in old times, there were no such armies, since states relied for their salvation and glory on their political virtues, severe habits and military traits, the like of which we in South America are far from possessing. As for the countries of our own day which have thrown off the yoke of their tyrants, it is a well-known fact that they have maintained the number of veteran soldiers required for their security, except in the case of North America, which, being at peace with the whole world and protected by the sea, has not thought fit, in recent years, to maintain an army of the strength required for defending its frontiers and fortified places . . .

"But what weakened the Venezuelan Government more than anything else was the federal system which it adopted, in exaggerated subservience to the doctrine of the Rights of Man, which, allowing man to govern himself, destroys social pacts and plunges nations into anarchy. . . .

"The federal system, though the best of all and the one best calculated to bring happiness to men living in social coöperation, is, notwithstanding, the worst for our new-born states. Our fellow citizens are not yet capable of exercising to the full their rights because they

lack the political virtues characterizing the genuine republican, virtues such as are not to be acquired under absolute forms of government which ignore the rights and duties of citizens.

"Moreover, what country in the world, no matter how law-abiding and republican, would be capable of governing itself, in the midst of internal dissension and a foreign war, by means of a system so complicated as the federal? Impossible to maintain such a government amid the tumult of battles and parties! A government must adapt itself to the circumstances, to the times, to the men surrounding it. If times are prosperous and serene, government must be easy-going and protective; if times are calamitous, it must inspire terror. It must arm itself with a firmness adequate to the dangers menacing the land, without a thought for law or constitutions, until happiness and peace have been restored. If Venezuela, in place of a weak and unsubstantial confederation, had established a simple form of government, such as was required by the political and military situation, then she would still exist today, in enjoyment of her liberty!"

Onward, onward, speeds the busy pen. New Granada, writes Bolívar, must win back Venezuela from Spain if she is to save herself from enslavement at the hands of the Spaniards. They are strong in the neighboring land; soon they will be on the march westward. New Granada and Cartagena will succumb unless there is prompt action.

"Let us hasten to break the chains of the victims groaning in the dungeons, ever hoping for salvation at your hands! Do not cheat their trust in you! Do not re-

main deaf to the laments of your brothers! Quick! Avenge the dead, give life to the dying, relief to the oppressed, liberty to all!"

There! Bolívar drops the pen, dries the last sheet of paper, passes his nervous fingers over his brow, reads, with burning eyes, his manifesto. To the printer!

Soon the manifesto is all over Cartagena. The words of the "colonel from Venezuela" make an impression; they are discussed on street-corners. "Yes, my boy, this young fellow is right, we must strike the Spaniards before they crush us!" Bolívar listens. He has been crafty, he is rewarded. Is he to find means to free Venezuela? Will the New Granadans consent to invade it, crossing towering mountains, pushing aside the Spaniards in the way?

"This young chap is right, I tell you; he argues well." Thus the talk on Cartagena's street-corners. Bolívar smiles. His hopes run high.

Labatut, a French adventurer, is military commander of the insurgents against Spain at Cartagena. He fought under Miranda in Venezuela, knows Bolívar, does not like him. If he had the only say in the matter, he would give the ambitious young Venezuelan no command, no chance to distinguish himself. But Bolívar's manifesto and personality have made a favorable impression on others. They tell Labatut that here is a valuable man, a man of ideas and energy, of whom good use should be made.

Reluctantly, the Frenchman summons Bolívar, informs him that he is to command a small detachment of soldiers at Barranca, east of Cartagena, on the Mag-

dalena, the great river that flows for hundreds of miles through the territory of New Granada, providing the only practical means of communication between the seacoast and Bogotá, the capital. Bolívar is delighted. Labatut, however, tempers his elation. On no account, his superior officer enjoins upon him, is he to stir from Barranca.

Puerto Cabello over again! Relegated to a job with no chance to distinguish himself; nothing to do but kick his heels in charge of a puny garrison! Second fiddle!

Never! Bolívar proceeds to Barranca with his mind made up. He has formed an audacious plan. Well he knows the risk, the bad example he will set, the possible dire penalty. Never mind! Is he to be kept under and robbed of the realization of the grandiose scheme taking shape in his brain because a jealous nonentity happens to have been placed by fate over him? No!—a thousand times no! Simon Bolívar is Simon Bolívar and Labatut is merely Labatut!

So off he goes to Barranca, outwardly acquiescent, inwardly mutinous. At the little group of hovels which, Labatut thinks, will circumscribe his activities, Bolívar parades his ragged soldiers. There are only about two hundred of them. He harangues them, sets them to assembling secretly a flotilla of river vessels and canoes. Along the Magdalena above Barranca there are several Spanish posts, which effectively cut off river communication between the patriots operating on the coast and those in revolt against Spain in the interior of New Granada. Why not give these Spaniards an unexpected slap and open up navigation on the great stream? Because Labatut has forbidden it? Bah!

Bolívar starts to play his first military lone hand—based on flat disobedience of orders, overshadowed by the danger of death in front of a firing squad. At the head of his ill-armed, ill-disciplined men, he turns the prows of his ramshackle flotilla up-stream.

The first Spanish post is at Tenerife, before which Bolívar appears quite unexpectedly. The surprise is too much for the Spanish garrison; they flee abruptly, abandoning arms, stores, boats—all most welcome to the daring young adventurer. He falls ill of a fever, but no matter! Forward! With hot brow and shivering limbs, he urges his little expedition to greater effort.

Skirmishing all the way, they reach Mompox, an important river town. The Spaniards, who have not recovered yet from their astonishment at Bolívar's sudden campaign, evacuate the place. Bolívar, his eyes burning partly from fever, partly from triumph, enters the town at the head of his unkempt force. He is received with enthusiasm. Recruits, many of them youths of the best families in the district, join him.

Mompox is a prize, a good one, but there are better further up-stream. At the head, now, of five hundred men, Bolívar again embarks. Encountering a considerable Spanish force at Chiriguaná, he beats it handsomely, capturing four armed river boats, rifles and ammunition, and—best of all—two small cannon! He now has even artillery! Things are looking up! He has almost forgotten to worry about what Labatut, back in Cartagena, may think of the whole mad escapade.

Another victory, and, in the midst of delirious enthusiasm, he marches proudly into Ocaña, capital of a

province and the most important town in the whole region roundabout. Only two weeks have elapsed since his departure from Barranca, yet he has won a round half dozen victories, cleared an enormous territory of Spanish soldiers, opened up navigation on the Magdalena. And he has done it while burning and shaking with fever! No wonder he smiles delightedly as he marches into Ocaña, no wonder he is more eloquent than usual in the harangues which he pours out to the people there!

But Labatut? The smile is struck from Bolívar's face. Like a schoolboy who has been playing truant he waits for the inevitable explosion from teacher.

It is not long in coming. The Frenchman is beside himself with anger. He demands instant explanation. Bolívar lamely reports that, feeling his position at Barranca insecure as long as there were Spaniards about, he had decided to chase them away. Labatut scornfully rejects this excuse, demands better. His young lieutenant counters by reciting the full tale of his river Odyssey, with its string of victories. Labatut refuses to be cajoled; he speaks of a court-martial.

But he can do nothing in the face of the wild joy in Cartagena when the story of Bolívar's Magdalena exploits is carried through the city. The civil officials are delighted. Here, at last, is a man of action! A genius! In vain Labatut storms; has not his subordinate committed the worst crime against the military decalogue? What hope can there be of success against Spain if officers who deliberately disobey orders are to be praised and encouraged to further dereliction?

But the angry tirades of the Frenchman pass unheeded.

"This Venezuelan colonel, I tell you, is the real thing!" Thus the talk on Cartagena's street-corners. The audacious youth, freed from the specter of summary punishment at the hands of his justly incensed commander, now turns to the realization of the scheme which has been all along at the bottom of his disobedience, of his desire to get himself into the limelight—the enlisting of the aid of New Granada for the reconquest of his native Venezuela from the Spaniards.

He points out eloquently to the Cartagena patriots, also to the authorities at the head of the republican government of New Granada at Bogotá, that it behooves them to strike hard and quickly if they wish to maintain themselves against revengeful Spain. Already Correa, Spanish commander at the Venezuelan city of Maracaibo, close to the New Granadan border, is threatening their territory; already Colonel Castillo, commanding the patriots at Pamplona, one of the threatened border towns, is asking for aid. How about marching the force which has just opened up navigation on the Magdalena across the mountains, joining Castillo, crushing Correa, and then—how about invading Venezuela?

The audacity of the plan, when it is laid before the New Granadan authorities, fairly takes their breath away.

It means toiling across a mountain range, traversing practically uninhabited regions where soldiers can find no sustenance beyond what they bring with them; it means engaging Spanish troops with every advantage of discipline, number, armament and position; it means involving the revolutionary government at Cartagena and Bogotá in the daring project of invading Venezuela

which, even if successful, will be costly and arduous, and, if not, will bring swift Spanish vengeance.

The New Granadans shake their heads. "Rather rash, young man!" "Doubt if you can make good!" Bolívar, his piercing eyes fixed on those he is seeking to win to his side, argues and argues, meets objections with swift retorts, makes all sound plausible, paints all in rosy hues.

Finally, he gets permission, from both Cartagena and Bogotá, to march his little force to the aid of Castillo.

Well, half a loaf is better than no bread. Let the invasion of Venezuela wait a while! Elated, Bolívar sets out.

It is early in February, 1813. He has barely four hundred men. Some thirty miles from Ocaña, where they have been living in comparative comfort and ease, they begin the ascent of a branch of the Andes which comes down through this region to the sea. It is a mountain-wall rising in a solid mass of forbidding rock, cut by gloomy ravines, so deep that no ray of the sun ever penetrates them. Step by step Bolívar and his men toil along the steep slopes bordering these dark hollows. The air, damp and piercingly cold, strikes to the marrow of the little force, composed practically entirely of men from the warm plains watered by the Magdalena, to whom cold is unknown. To make matters worse they are clad in scanty, thin garments, affording scarcely any protection against the chill mountain air.

Higher and higher they climb. Thunder roars amid the gloom and dampness; rain pours down in streams, soaking the shivering soldiers; lightning flashes across the hideous gorges, illumining cavernous depths, on the

brink of which they are painfully treading. Many, taking a false step, slip over the edge and are dashed to pieces hundreds of feet below.

The Spaniards have got wind of the march. At the strong position of La Aguada, Correa's advance guard confidently awaits the audacious young Venezuelan and his exhausted followers. But Bolívar has thought up a trick far better than launching his weary men in a frontal attack against the enemy. He has sent ahead an Indian of the region with a dispatch concealed upon his person. The Spaniards intercept the Indian—exactly as Bolívar wished. The commander of the Spanish advance guard reads the dispatch, which is addressed to an officer of Castillo's force apparently advancing to attack La Aguada in the rear, and contains instructions how the attack is to be carried out.

Castillo has sent no such force to coöperate with Bolívar—there is no threat to the Spanish rear—but the commander at La Aguada fully believes what the dispatch says. That is exactly what Bolívar has expected him to do! In haste the Spaniard evacuates his strong position to meet the mythical threat from the rear. When he learns his mistake, Bolívar is in possession of La Aguada.

More arduous miles over rocky pathways—and then, finally, almost spent with weariness, Bolívar's little column debouches into the valleys of Cúcuta, fertile and beautiful, on the border between New Granada and Venezuela, and threatens San José de Cúcuta, the principal town of the region. As they slip down the cruel Andean slopes, the green valleys below seem like Paradise to the emaciated soldiers!

But the gates of Paradise are not open yet! Correa, the Spanish leader, bars the way. Bolívar and he fight a furious four hours' battle, in which the young man from Carácas, realizing that defeat now will mean the annihilation of all his hopes, drives his tired soldiers to prodigies of valor. The Spaniards are completely routed. Leaving half his men on the field, Correa takes to his heels.

Amid enthusiasm like that accompanying his triumphal entry into Mompox and Ocaña, Bolívar enters San José de Cúcuta. There he captures an enormous amount of merchandise, assembled by the Spanish merchants of Maracaibo, in the confident belief that Correa was about to open up the rich valleys of Cúcuta to commerce and pour enormous profits into their pockets. The booty is worth more than a million pesos.

But there is no time for gloating! Bolívar and his men cross the little river Táchira, which bounds New Granada, and encamp close to San Antonio, on the Venezuelan side of the stream.

In Venezuela again! Is he to reconquer his native land from the enemy, wash out the ignominy of Miranda's capitulation and his own sorry flight from Carácas?

Without loss of time he reports his victorious advance to the republican authorities at Bogotá and Cartagena and respectfully solicits permission to continue it. Already he has resolved not only to enter the Venezuelan provinces bordering on New Granada but actually to advance westward, hundreds of miles, in the teeth of thousands of Spaniards, to the very city of Carácas itself!

However, he does not yet quite dare tell that to the New Granadan authorities—they would probably faint with astonishment, relieve him of his command! Instead, he modestly asks leave to invade the Venezuelan provinces of Mérida and Trujillo, which are next door to New Granada.

While awaiting an answer he has a serious falling-out with Castillo, who resigns rather than serve under Bolívar's orders. Castillo's soldiers—some five hundred, indispensable to Bolívar if he is to succeed in his plan—come under the command of another New Granadan, Santander. The latter—of whom much hereafter—also shows hostility. He refuses to let his men join the invasion. The Venezuelan forestalls the possible dire results of this defection in drastic and imperious fashion. Striding up to Santander, he exclaims:

"I command you to give the order to your men to march with me into Venezuela! Do so, or one of two things will happen; either you will shoot me or I most certainly will shoot you!"

Santander quails before those burning black eyes—the first of many to be overawed by them when they are lighted up by the fire of anger. He gives the order to his men to follow Bolívar, if need be. But he also sends in his resignation. The battalion, without Castillo and Santander, comes under Bolívar's orders.

Elsewhere he meets enthusiastic support. Brave men, New Granadans and Venezuelans, rally around him, bid him lead them as far as he will. Urdaneta, one of his fellow countrymen, destined to serve under Bolívar for many years in many hard campaigns, places his sword at the youth's disposal. "If two men are enough to in-

vade Venezuela, let me be the second!" he exclaims.

Soon after, the New Granadan authorities give grudging assent to Bolívar's request to be allowed to penetrate farther into Venezuela. Joyfully he issues the order to advance. His little army, elated and confident, presses forward toward the important Venezuelan town of Mérida. They occupy it without opposition from the Spaniards.

On to Trujillo!

Chapter VI

WAR TO THE DEATH

AT Trujillo Bolívar made what was perhaps the biggest mistake of his whole life.

For some time past the struggle between those who wished to free South America from Spain and the Spaniards and their South American sympathizers, had been assuming an even bitterer character. Cruelty overshadowing anything practiced by Monteverde or those arrayed against him was beginning to sully the fighting. The Spanish commanders against whom Bolívar was marching (such as Tízcar at Barinas) were arousing people against them by their brutality; while, on the other side, certain leaders were no whit behind them in the ferocity of their methods.

Shortly before Bolívar began his advance into Venezuela, a Venezuelan named Briceño—a fanatical hater of Spain, whose ruthlessness had earned him the nickname of "The Devil"—started with about one hundred and fifty men on a lone-hand invasion of his native land. He issued a decree to the effect that promotion under him would be based on the number of heads of dead Spaniards brought in by each man; and, to show that his threats were no mere empty bombast, he caused the assassination of two peaceful Spaniards at the first Venezuelan town occupied by him, and sent their heads to

Bolívar and Castillo, with an explanatory letter written in the blood of the victims.

Bolívar was horrified. He at once issued orders to Briceño to desist from his enterprise. But before the order reached "The Devil," he had advanced farther into Venezuela, engaged in battle with Tízcar, the Spanish commander at Barinas, suffered complete defeat and met death at Tízcar's hands.

Briceño's execution had occurred a short time before Bolívar's occupation of Trujillo. Coupled with reports of similar instances of Spanish severity, it served to dim in Bolívar's mind the memory of Briceño's own atrocities, and helped push him toward a decision which had long been in his mind. After a period of hesitation, he finally brushed aside all misgivings. On the fifteenth of June, 1813, from his headquarters at Trujillo, he issued his celebrated "War to the Death Proclamation," which has aroused more controversy and done more to harm him than any other act of his career.

There is no need to reproduce it; the essence of this ruthless document is to be found in its concluding sentence:

"Spaniards and Canary Islanders, count upon death, even though you are neutral, unless you work actively for the liberty of America! Americans, count upon life, even though you are guilty!"

Bolívar's intention in launching this bloodthirsty manifesto was undoubtedly to split Venezuela into two parties, to do away with all lukewarm espousals of one side or the other, by stating in unequivocal terms that the fight was one between Spaniards and colonials. Henceforth there was to be no shillyshallying. For

a man to be a Spaniard was to be tantamount to a death sentence, if he were captured; for him to be an American was to be sufficient cause for his life to be spared.

Bolívar undoubtedly hoped great things from this ruthless decree. He thought it would divide the land into two camps, force those seeking to find out which side was going to win into one camp or the other. Unfortunately, it did not have any such sweeping effect. The Spaniards and their sympathizers only closed ranks with stronger determination; the adherents of the cause of independence only found the fight before them all the stiffer. The Trujillo decree served to brand Bolívar among the Spaniards, and among those whom they were seeking to hold to their allegiance to the Spanish king, as a monster of cruelty. It served also as an excuse for naturally cruel Spanish leaders to multiply their outrages, since they could now allege these to be mere retaliation.

The conflict, already bitter and cruel enough, took on, after the promulgation of the "War to the Death" decree, an incredible ruthlessness and ferocity. Venezuela's soil was soaked in blood; some of her fairest towns were laid in ruins; whole populations were put to the sword; no mercy was shown to men, women or children. Within eight years she had lost, through deaths in battle or massacre, or from disease and privation, fully one-third of her scant one million inhabitants. Nowhere else in South America was the fight for independence accompanied by such bloodthirsty fury; nowhere else were the losses and desolation caused by it so great.

Bolívar and his fiery uncle with the Phrygian cap now

pushed forward their operations with astounding celerity —and without awaiting the sanction of the Bogotá government.

First, they spread reports out of Trujillo calculated to deceive the Spaniard Tízcar, who was marching toward them from Barinas, as to their real intentions. Then Ribas, leading a column of some eight hundred determined men over a spur of the Andes, surprised Tízcar's advance guard, under Martí, at Niquitao. Though the Spaniards had the advantage of position and number, he attacked them with such impetuosity as to drive them from the field in utter rout. Ribas captured a large amount of arms and ammunition, also scores of prisoners. The American-born among the latter he incorporated in his own ranks; the Spanish-born he summarily shot. For him, "War to the Death" was on in earnest.

Meanwhile Bolívar, moving with a rapidity worthy of Napoleon or Stonewall Jackson, suddenly appeared outside Barinas, the headquarters of Tízcar, to the latter's utter amazement. The Spaniard decided not to risk a battle; instead, he fled toward the Apure river. Thirteen cannon, ammunition, rifles, plenty of powder and other war material fell into Bolívar's hands when he marched into Barinas next day.

Then came Ribas's turn again. Attacking a Spanish force of fifteen hundred men sent against him from Barquisimeto, he, at the head of a much inferior force, won a brilliant victory. Ribas himself led the last deciding charge, sword in hand, red Phrygian cap pushed far back on his head, above his blazing eyes.

Then Bolívar, having added several hundred men to

his forces at Barinas, advanced daringly toward San Carlos, in the very heart of Venezuela, only a few leagues from Valencia, the second city of the land. Monteverde, the Spanish commander-in-chief (who had been badly beaten shortly before by Venezuelan rebels in the eastern provinces, who had risen against Spain at about the time Bolívar had begun his march), hurried from Carácas to Valencia to meet the new menace.

With twenty-three hundred men Bolívar attacked the Spaniard Izquierdo at Los Taguanes, before Monteverde could come up. Izquierdo proved himself a good soldier; his men fought with desperate bravery; for six hours the issue hung in doubt. At last the Spaniards, having withstood charge after charge of Bolívar's troops, were too shaken to continue holding their positions—yet they were by no means beaten. They started to retire to some hills in their rear, Izquierdo having calculated that, if he could once reach these, he could realign his battalions and retreat to Valencia in good order, leaving Bolívar and his little army in possession of the blood-soaked battlefield—a sterile victory!

Bolívar guessed Izquierdo's plan. Instantly he leaped to forestall it.

"Occupy those heights!" he commanded his cavalry. But, looking over his shattered squadrons, as they formed to obey, he realized how few they were, how inadequate to hold the hills against what remained of Izquierdo's forces.

Whereupon a brilliant inspiration flashed across the Venezuelan's brain. Imperiously summoning a number of infantrymen he pointed to the horses of the cavalry.

"Mount!" he commanded.

An infantryman scrambled onto each horse, sitting bareback, behind the rider.

"Forward!" The cavalrymen spurred their horses, away went the squadrons at such speed that they soon distanced the Spaniards making for the hills. The infantrymen, clinging as best they could to their precarious perch on the horses' cruppers, opened a scattering rifle-fire against the amazed enemy.

The Venezuelans were soon on the hill slopes. The infantrymen, leaping to the ground, hastily formed in line of battle, while the cavalrymen, freed of those who had been hanging on behind them, turned around and charged on the advancing Spaniards.

Izquierdo's men, caught between Bolívar's main force and the mixed cavalry and infantry column which had so unexpectedly occupied the heights, were literally cut to pieces. Seven hundred of them fell dead or wounded, hundreds more were captured. Arms, munitions, large amounts of money, equipment, all fell into the hands of the patriots. One lone Spanish officer, spurring his horse into the thick of the cheering victors, managed to cut his way through and carry the news of the rout to Monteverde at Valencia. Izquierdo himself was picked up, mortally wounded. By Bolívar's order he was hurried to a hospital at San Carlos, where he died within a few hours.

When Monteverde heard about the battle of Los Taguanes he evacuated Valencia and hurried to ensconce himself behind the strong fortifications of its seaport, Puerto Cabello—the place lost by Bolívar a few short months before. So great was the Spanish leader's haste that he even abandoned a trunk filled with private cor-

respondence, in which Bolívar's men, who entered the city upon the foe's very heels, found a letter from one of Monteverde's subordinates, Zerberiz, advising that not a single one of the "infamous men fomenting trouble against Spain" should be "left with life in him."

Bolívar lost no time dallying at Valencia. His objective was Carácas, capital of Venezuela, his birthplace. Until he had entered it he could not count his march, amazingly successful though it had been, a complete victory such as he had assured the timid New Granadan authorities that he could obtain.

He entered Carácas on the sixth of August, 1813, less than six weeks from the day he had left Trujillo, in disobedience of instructions, beckoned onward by the goddess of good fortune whose urgings he never ignored.

Carácas gave him delirious welcome. Thousands of Caraqueños, unable, in their impatience, to await him in the streets, hurried out miles on the road by which he was expected, to return cityward huzzaing and waving, mixed higgledy-piggledy with the soldiers of the little army. In Carácas itself the welcome became a tumult. Forgetting the woes showered upon them by earthquake and war, the Caraqueños cheered themselves hoarse as Bolívar rode past them. Young girls, running ahead of his horse, scattered flowers in his path.

"Viva el Libertador!" roared the crowd. For the first time Bolívar heard the appellation which was to be his from that day. "El Libertador! Hail the Liberator!" Men and women shouted it in his ears, in a delirium of elation. He bowed and smiled right and left. And behind him, his dusty, dirt-caked soldiers, whom he had led from the New Granadan border six hundred

miles away, slouched along, with admirers, male and female, hanging to their arms, their pouches filled with bullets wrested from the enemy, Spanish rifles on their shoulders, grins of joy on their bronzed faces. "Viva el Libertador!"

Avenged was Miranda's capitulation to Monteverde, Bolívar's ignominious flight of a few months before to Curaçao and Cartagena. Where, now, were those who had humiliated or defied him? Poor Miranda lay chained, in a fetid dungeon, guarded by gloating Spaniards. Labatut, the French adventurer, could no longer order him about and pour censure on his head. Castillo and Santander, hundreds of miles away in their native New Granada, were reduced to impotent envy.

In his elation, however, Bolívar did not forget that, though he had disobeyed the New Granadan government, it behooved him to keep on good terms with it, and, incidentally, to contribute as much as possible toward having it think as highly of his Venezuelan campaign as he did himself. Soon after his triumphal entry into Carácas, he wrote to Don Camilo Torres, head of the revolutionary government at Bogotá:

"So, you see, I have kept my promise to liberate my native land, and proved to you, in the clearest possible manner, that my plan was not too risky, as some persons sought to make your government believe. Not only was it not too risky, but it could not possibly have been more successful. In the three months during which I have been waging war in Venezuela I have not fought a single battle that has not been won by our troops, and, from each one of these battles, I have derived every imaginable advantage, having, by activity and rapidity in

marching, succeeded in disconcerting the enemy and terrifying him through the valor displayed by our soldiers."

Having enjoyed himself to the full at Carácas, listening to the adulation of the enthusiastic Caraqueños and issuing proclamations, Bolívar bethought himself that it was time to march against his old enemy, Monteverde, who, though cooped up in Puerto Cabello, might sally forth at any moment, brush aside the weak force watching him, and make more trouble. So, on August 16, 1813, ten days after his triumphal entry into the capital, he marched on Puerto Cabello. By a dashing attack he took the outside forts, reducing Monteverde to the inner town and the fortress dominating it.

Among the prisoners captured by Bolívar was Zuazola, a Spaniard who had been guilty of horrible cruelties. The Venezuelan leader offered to exchange Zuazola for Colonel Jalón, one of Monteverde's captives—otherwise, he said, he would have the cruel Spaniard executed. Monteverde refused the offer, adding that he would kill two prisoners held by him for every one killed by Bolívar. Despite this threat, Bolívar had Zuazola hanged in plain view of his comrades behind the walls of Puerto Cabello, and Monteverde, probably afraid of dire reprisals, refrained from executing Jalón.

Having received reinforcements from Puerto Rico, Monteverde made a sally from behind the fortifications of Puerto Cabello, causing Bolívar to fall back toward Valencia. At Bárbula there ensued a sharp fight between the Spaniards and a force of patriots, in the course of which Girardot, a valiant young New Granadan, who had accompanied Bolívar on his march from New Gra-

nada across Venezuela, was stretched dead by a Spanish bullet. Bolívar at once issued a proclamation extolling to the skies Girardot's bravery and sent the young man's heart to Carácas, where it was buried amid much pomp. There was method in this—it behooved Bolívar to keep in favor with the New Granadans, whose government had authorized him to march on Carácas and given him valuable aid in his audacious undertaking.

Shortly after the encounter at Bárbula, another New Granadan, D'Elhuyar, at the head of a force of fellow countrymen burning to avenge Girardot, gave Monteverde a severe beating at Las Trincheras and drove him headlong into Puerto Cabello. Monteverde, wounded in the fight, was obliged to turn over the command of the fortress to Colonel Salomón, who had brought him the reinforcements from Puerto Rico.

In October Bolívar returned to Carácas. There he instituted the "Order of Liberators," membership in which was to be confined to men who had participated in the liberation of Venezuela and New Granada. The first members were Bolívar's uncle, José Félix Ribas; Urdaneta, one of the most efficient fighters among the patriots; the brave D'Elhuyar; Colonel Ortega, another doughty champion of independence; and Campo Elías, a Spaniard serving against his native country, who was filled with such a hatred of his fellow countrymen that he had once remarked: "I wish I could kill every Spaniard in the world and then commit suicide in order that not one of the cursed race should remain alive!"

Though he had founded the "Order of the Liberators" the title of *El Libertador—The Liberator*—was kept by Bolívar for himself. By that title he is called

as often by Venezuelans and other natives of Northern South America as by his name. "I deem it a greater honor," he said, "than the scepter of all the empires of the earth."

While the Liberator was marching from the New Granadan frontier across western Venezuela to Carácas, driving the Spaniards everywhere before him, other Venezuelan patriots had been active and successful in the eastern part of their native land. Among these were several men destined to win bright fame—Santiago Mariño, a young aristocrat of "Oriente," as Venezuelans call their eastern provinces; José Francisco Bermúdez, one of the bravest of the foes of Spain in Venezuela; Manuel Piar, a mulatto from the island of Curaçao, of much ability and great ambition; and Antonio José Sucre, to whom destiny was to apportion celebrity in the northern half of South America second only to that of Simon Bolívar himself. After the collapse of Miranda's republic, these men, and a few others, had taken refuge on the British island of Trinidad, where they were treated with scant courtesy by the English governor, Sir Ralph Woodford. Once Sir Ralph, in a studied attempt to humiliate Mariño, alluded to him as a "rebel," whereupon the young Venezuelan retorted: "I do not feel insulted at being called by an epithet which Your Excellency's countrymen bestowed upon George Washington!"

In January, 1813, Mariño and some fifty companions, with no arms except five muskets, crossed in an open boat from Trinidad to the nearest point in Venezuela, separated from the British island by only a few miles

of sea. Reinforced by hundreds of other patriots—some of them Indians, armed only with bows and arrows—they divided themselves into various forces and, by a series of surprise attacks, defeated several detachments of Spaniards, whose arms and ammunition were most welcome to the invaders.

Piar and Bermúdez, moving rapidly southward, occupied the important town of Maturín, amid the rejoicings of its inhabitants. This success so angered Monteverde—not as yet cooped up in Puerto Cabello—that he hastened eastward with a considerable force, bent on recovering Maturín. Piar, however, gave him a bad drubbing and sent him scurrying back to the central provinces—which Bolívar, advancing from New Granada, was already menacing.

On August 3, 1813, three days before the occupation of Carácas by the victorious troops of Bolívar, Mariño occupied the important city of Cumaná, capital of the eastern Venezuelan province of that name. Thus, while Bolívar had secured to the patriots Carácas, Valencia and other important cities in the center of the country, and had driven Monteverde to take refuge behind the ramparts of Puerto Cabello, Mariño, Piar and their comrades had practically driven the Spaniards from eastern Venezuela.

Bolívar lost no time in getting in touch with Mariño and arranging plans for coöperation with him in further operations. He acknowledged Mariño as "Dictator of the East," reserving to himself dictatorial powers over all Venezuela.

Chapter VII

ATTILA

THINGS were going well with Simon Bolívar. The first laurels were upon his brow; the note of boasting in his proclamations seemed justified. He had pitted himself against other men and bent their wills to his. Miranda lay in chains, slowly dying; Labatut, the French adventurer of Cartagena, had been swept from his path, Castillo and Santander elbowed out of the way, when they presumptuously sought to thwart him. And his invasion of Venezuela? Magnificently achieved! And the Spaniards who had dared oppose him—what of them? Tízcar? Probably still running. Izquierdo? Dead. Monteverde? Cowering behind the ramparts of Puerto Cabello. For Simon Bolívar there was the smell of incense; waves of adulation were breaking over him; the world looked fair.

Yet the storm was gathering. Black clouds were forming in the bright sky of his life.

Against his iron will another will of iron was to be matched; against his swift and daring tactics of warfare another warrior was to pit swiftness, daring and hideous cruelty, the power to strike like a thunderbolt and devastate like a forest fire. As if alienated by Bolívar's boasts and self-congratulation, fate was about to launch upon him a savage admonition.

Out of the rolling plains of Venezuela it was to come; out of the vast "llanos"—with their miles upon miles of waving grass, their roaming herds of cattle and centaurs of inhabitants, bestriding little horses that seemed limbs of their limbs and blood of their blood—the vengeance of fate was to flash forth upon Bolívar and his fellow fighters in the cause of South American liberty. Out of the llanos another Attila was to gallop—riding, like Attila, at the head of clouds of cruel horsemen; created, like Attila, to live in men's memories as a terror and a scourge; destined, like Attila, to burn, ruin and kill wherever he went.

José Tomás Boves! * Long has he been in his grave, yet his ferocious spirit still hovers over Venezuela's plains and towns, where he rode and fought and massacred. In the wars of South America other leaders, many of them, fighting for and against Spain, stained their records by sacking towns and butchering prisoners, but none equaled Boves in cruelty. On that friend and foe are agreed. Others killed in anger or retaliation, blindness or despair. Boves shed blood because he liked to shed it, inflicted suffering because he liked to inflict it. On the llanos of Venezuela mothers to this day reduce children to trembling obedience by threatening to bring Boves to punish them.

Boves! In the annals of the regions which he ravaged like a flame from hell he lives on, a figure of wrath and savagery, an unclean specter of destruction—Satanic, sadistic, implacable. And Boves it was who was chosen by fate to chastise Simon Bolívar, to crush his ambitions to dust, to send him, seemingly, fleeing back into

* Pronounced in two syllables, thus: BOH–VESS.

the oblivion out of which he had but just raised himself.

Boves came from the province of Asturias in Spain. He was tall, spare, red-haired. Arrested by the Spaniards as a smuggler, he spent some time in the dungeons of Puerto Cabello. After being freed, he joined the Spanish army fighting in Venezuela. When Cajigal, commander of the Spanish troops in the eastern provinces, was forced by Piar's victories to flee across the Orinoco, Boves refused to follow. He would stay on the left bank, he said, and continue the fight there.

He repaired to the llanos, and began organizing an army. His ascendancy over the wild llaneros was uncanny; he offered them pillage and murder and unbridled freedom, but, on the other hand, he exacted blind obedience and, what is more, he got it. It was nothing for him to slay a recalcitrant soldier with his own hand. Yet the llaneros flocked around him by the thousands, looked up to him as a demigod of war. "From every blade of grass," says a Venezuelan chronicler, "there seemed to spring a man and a horse!"

Wild-eyed, lithe as panthers, torsos overdeveloped and legs underdeveloped by constant riding, living on meat almost unsalted, caring not whether they fought for or against the King of Spain provided they could rob and kill, thousands of these centaurs, armed with long, sharp lances, suddenly burst out of their native llanos with José Tomás Boves, Attila of South America, at their head, and swarmed, like sanguinary locusts, against that part of Venezuela held by Bolívar and his comrades. With the horsemen of Boves, commanding an auxiliary force of infantry, came Tomás Morales,

a Spaniard from the Canary Islands, almost as cruel as his chief, destined to be through a whole decade a scourge to Venezuela.

As they advanced, horror was piled on horror. Capturing a few unfortunate foes near Calabozo, in the llanos, Boves caused them to be stripped, had their heads shaved, had them bound to stakes in the market-place, and left them there under the burning rays of the sun, until some of them died in an agony of sweat and madness and torment. Prisoners were butchered by the hundred. "Kill every captive except musicians and surgeons!" commanded Boves. "I want a military band to cheer my men and doctors to cure their wounds!" Every town entered became a mass of ruins trickling with blood.

Once an old man, an insurgent against Spain, was led before Boves.

"Kill him!" growled the savage Asturian. But just as the prisoner was being led to execution, a young boy stepped forward. "He is my father," said the boy, "kill me instead."

Boves signed to his butchers to wait.

"If I spare your father," he said, "will you promise to stand without flinching while your ears and nose are cut off?"

"I will," answered the boy.

He stood like a Spartan, while the ever-ready butchers tore and hacked away his ears and nose. Boves looked on, unmoved. Then he said:

"Kill the old man! He has fought against Spain. And kill the boy too. He is brave and will make a good

fighter against Spain." In a few minutes father and son lay dead.

Win or lose, Boves called every fight in which he engaged a victory. "What is the difference?" he would say. "Are not all the dead, among my men as well as among the enemy, Americans? The more Americans die, the better. I should like to see them all die!"

After one victory won by his lawless llaneros, he wrote to his superior, Cajigal:

"I have retrieved the honor of Spain, which Your Excellency lost!" And when the Spanish authorities, meekly passing over his insults, notified him that he had been made a colonel, in reward for his achievements, Boves remarked:

"Bah! What of it? I make colonels myself!"

Such the man, such his army!

When this "Infernal Division," as it was dubbed by those who had tasted its quality, suddenly burst out of the llanos, Bolívar was besieging Monteverde at Puerto Cabello. Against the new menace the Venezuelan commander sent Campo Elías, the Spanish renegade. This fanatical fighter, with some three thousand men, ran against Boves, with an overwhelmingly superior force, at La Puerta—a field destined to be of black omen to Venezuelan patriots.

The ensuing fight, short and terrible, ended in a complete victory for Boves. Almost the entire army of his opponent was killed in the battle or butchered after it. Elated and threatening, the cavalry of Boves, with the infantry of Morales, surged toward Carácas. With Bolívar besieging Puerto Cabello, many miles to the west-

ward, and Campo Elías destroyed, they thought the road to the Venezuelan capital wide open.

Carácas shivered with terror. But Bolívar still had one card to play to save his native city. That card was his indomitable uncle, José Félix Ribas, he of the Phrygian cap. From the lines before Puerto Cabello, far in Boves's rear, Bolívar sent messages to Ribas vibrating with urgency. "Save Carácas at any cost!" was the gist of them. And Ribas, pulling down the Phrygian cap over his bronzed features, set out to obey.

He had but a small force of soldiers. But he swelled his ranks by incorporating in them the students at the University of Carácas—boys, for the most part under eighteen—whom he fired to a frenzy of patriotic ardor by his eloquence.

He turned next to the slaves.

"Every one of you who fights well will be a free man!" he told them. Hundreds of blacks stepped forward, shouldered rifles, awaited orders.

With this motley force and half a dozen small cannon, Ribas marched to La Victoria, the key to Carácas, situated where the road from the smiling valleys of Aragua starts to climb the mountains girdling the Venezuelan capital.

There, uttering hideous cries, pressing bare knees against the lean flanks of their horses, brandishing lances dripping blood, thousands and thousands of Boves's wild llaneros, riding close together, wave upon wave upon wave, interspersed with the cruel infantrymen of Morales, line after line, hurled themselves in fury on the little army of Ribas.

Many battles have been fought in Venezuela besides La Victoria; in many larger forces have engaged; out of many bigger results have flowed. Yet none of them has, among Venezuelans, a greater fame, none has brought to those who took part in it greater glory. All alone it stands, this battle of La Victoria, with a quality all its own, unique in Venezuelan history. Say "La Victoria" to any Venezuelan and his eyes will flash with pride —ay, to this day, though more than a century has passed since Boves, on that morning in 1814, hurled his clouds of savage followers against Ribas, and Ribas, in unflinching obduracy, pitted against them his scanty battalions of soldiers, his squads of half-grown college boys, his untried negroes.

Into the streets of La Victoria, from all directions, poured the horsemen of Boves and the riflemen of Morales, turning the little town into a hell of blood and din. Attack after attack was broken by the men of Ribas. They stood firm. They shot down the centaurs of Boves as they charged, they bayoneted those who broke into their lines. Even when felled and trampled by the great mass of human flesh and horse flesh pounding over them, they clung, dying, to horses' legs and horses' tails, shooting and stabbing until the last vestige of life was crushed out of them.

The little cannon brought by Ribas from Carácas vomited death until they glowed red-hot, until each shot seemed sure to burst them asunder; in front of them the enemy's dead lay in reddened heaps. But still the enemy came on, like troops of maniacs, impelled forward by officers with swords swinging over their heads and mani-

acal curses on their lips, and, as soon as one wave was broken against the defenders, Boves and Morales drove in new masses of cavalry and infantry.

With bullets whistling about his ears, men tumbling dead by his side, the grim man with the Phrygian cap inspired his men to fanatical valor. They rose above themselves. Living, they fought like tigers at bay; dying, phrases leaped to their lips which have lived ever since in Venezuela's annals.

One soldier, at his last gasp, cried: "I want the whole battalion to know that I did not retreat one single inch!" Another, a humble private, coughing out his life on the ground behind the trench which he had helped hold against a dozen crashing attacks, motioned toward three rifles lying beside him and said: "I captured those. Take them to General Ribas. They are all I own in this world. I bequeath them to him!" And Rivas-Dávila, a heroic young officer, mortally wounded, cried to the surgeon who had just extracted the fatal bullet from his breast. "Take that bullet to my wife, doctor, and tell her it gave me the most glorious moment of my life!"

After six hours of such furious fighting, there came a limit to what Ribas and his men could do. They were forced from position after position, from street after street, until, finally, they were cooped up in the little central plaza of La Victoria. From every direction Boves and Morales drove forward their ferocious followers; ever more savage grew their cries, ever more terrific their onslaughts. After one particularly heavy attack, delivered with such a weight of men and horses that it seemed impossible for any defense to stand against it, Ribas turned to an aide and said quietly:

"Well, we can beat off just about two more like that!"

The end seemed at hand. It looked like another victory for the terrible Boves, a victory that would throw wide open to him the road to the capital city of Venezuela.

Suddenly, from the church steeple over the plaza, there came a shout. Excitedly the watcher there was pointing to the road leading to La Victoria from the valleys of Aragua, to the westward. A cloud of dust was visible some distance down the road.

It was Campo Elías, the Spaniard who hated Spain, with the remnant of his army, a mere squad of cavalry which had survived the beating administered shortly before by Boves at La Puerta. Forgetting how hopelessly outnumbered he was, forgetting everything but his craving to come to grips again with the man who had beaten him, Campo Elías flung himself and his little force of riders against the foe.

Weak the attack was, puny the force that delivered it. But it was enough. The riders of Boves, the foot soldiers of Morales, had been fighting all day against a defense superhuman in its quality. Before the horsemen of Campo Elías the great masses of the enemy broke and retreated.

Gathering up the last vestiges of their strength, the men of Ribas, hastily forming in the plaza, swept forward to the support of him who had so unexpectedly saved them from annihilation. The combined attack was too much for the Spaniards.

La Victoria was won. Carácas was saved. Under his red headgear, José Félix Ribas smiled a grim smile of

triumph. Never before had he won such a fight. Never again was he destined to harvest such a victory.

La Victoria gave only brief respite. As with Simon Bolívar, adversity seemed to strengthen Boves. He recruited fresh forces of centaurs, planned new swoops into Republican Venezuela. And cruelty, ever blacker, ever more hideous, stained the annals of the war. Into the rich valleys of the Tuy, Boves sent Rosete, a worthy helper, to sack and burn and murder. At the town of Ocumare del Tuy, Rosete's men cut down the inhabitants even in the church where they had taken refuge. Ribas, hero of La Victoria, sent against him by Bolívar, gave Rosete a bad beating and delivered the Tuy region from him and his troopers. Among the spoils which fell to the patriots in the battle was a branding-iron with the letter "R" used by the cruel Spaniard to brand captured foes. "R" stood for "Republican."

Both sides seemed to have been seized by a sort of blood-lust, a craving for wholesale murder. The rules of civilized war were flouted; the giving of quarter was a forgotten thing.

With Monteverde still holding out in Puerto Cabello and Boves planning fresh onslaughts, Bolívar was driven to an extreme of cruelty worthy of his adversary, the terrible man from Asturias. At Carácas and La Guaira there were hundreds of prisoners, Spaniards and Venezuelan sympathizers with Spain. It was difficult to guard them, there was talk of a revolt among them, savagery had become a commonplace.

Apprised by Palacios and Arismendi, in command at Carácas and La Guaira, of the danger to which these

batches of prisoners exposed those guarding them, Bolívar curtly wrote: "I order you to shoot all Spanish prisoners in the dungeons and hospital without any exception whatever."

The order was carried out with grim thoroughness by Palacios and Arismendi. To save ammunition, many of the prisoners were cut down with bayonets, knives and axes. Before death they were forced to build funeral pyres for the burning of their corpses. Eight hundred perished.

Soon after, Boves, at the head of another army of horsemen from the plains and the reorganized infantry under Morales, swept northward again from the llanos. In all, they numbered at least seven thousand.

Bolívar, with a much smaller force, faced them at San Mateo; the pivot of his lines was his own dwelling-house, on his own great coffee plantation, where he had passed the golden days of his honeymoon with Maria Teresa ten years before.

Gone was all the sweetness, all the peace, of those days. The house rocked to the roar of cannon, the thud of horses' hoofs, the yells of charging battalions, the groans of dying men. It was the first meeting of Boves and Bolívar. The Asturian swore he would crush the young Caraqueño under the heels of his horses; Bolívar, undaunted, imparted to his men courage like that inspired by Ribas at La Victoria.

Twenty furious attacks were launched by Boves. All were beaten. But what a shambles was the house where Bolívar had spent the happy days of his honeymoon. Everywhere, in passages, in living rooms, on the pillared corridor fronting the house, in clearings and coffee

groves surrounding it, men lay dead and wounded. One of those who perished, cursing and fighting to his last gasp, was Campo Elías, the renegade Spaniard.

Attack after attack was led by Boves in person, brandishing his huge lance, prodding his men forward, threatening laggards with swift death. In all his life, the terrible Asturian was rarely seen to smile—and never had he been caught weeping. On this day of his first battle against Bolívar he was riding a splendid horse, an animal upon which he was wont to lavish an affection far surpassing anything he ever showed for man or woman. In the midst of the fighting a bullet struck the horse and mortally wounded it. Boves, leaping from the saddle, threw his arms around the neck of the dying beast and, bursting into tears before the eyes of his astonished followers, remained thus by the horse's side until it rolled over, dead. Then, bestriding another horse, he galloped, more terrible than ever, into the carnage and fracas of the battle.

He concentrated his attack now on one of the buildings of the Bolívar plantation, where the patriots had stored an enormous quantity of powder. The defense had been entrusted to Ricaurte, a young New Granadan officer who had accompanied Bolívar in the invasion of Venezuela.

When Ricaurte saw that defense was hopeless, he sent away the wounded and the last remnant of the garrison, and waited, with drawn pistol, calm and defiant. He waited until hundreds of Boves's men, howling in triumph, were inside the building. Then he fired his pistol into some gunpowder. With a flash and a roar the building leaped into the air. Ricaurte and scores

of the enemy were torn to pieces. It was the last straw for Boves. He ordered a retreat. San Mateo was a victory for Bolívar. The name of Ricaurte has not been forgotten in Venezuela.

Meanwhile Urdaneta had been defeated by the royalists Ceballos and Cajigal and cooped up in the city of Valencia. Bolívar, weakened by his heavy losses at San Mateo, dared not march to his aid.

But now help came at last from Mariño, the "Dictator of the East." Arriving with a fresh force of patriots, Mariño succeeded in giving Boves a beating at Bocachica. The Asturian refused, as usual, to stay beaten. Reforming his army, he appeared before Valencia with three thousand men, raising the besiegers of Urdaneta to over six thousand.

Urdaneta, though in desperate straits, doggedly held the town. When he was almost done for, Bolívar and Mariño, with a considerable force, appeared outside it. The Spaniards raised the siege. Sullenly Boves fell back to the llanos to get more centaurs. Bolívar, after clasping the hand of the heroic Urdaneta and congratulating him on his splendid defense of Valencia, rushed away to Carácas to see how many more soldiers he could squeeze out of that exhausted, ruined city.

Getting all he could—not many!—he marched back to Valencia, where he reviewed his little army. Five thousand in all. How many llaneros would Boves muster this time?

While awaiting the terrible Spaniard, Bolívar won a clean-cut victory over Cajigal and Ceballos and sent them in full retreat toward that stronghold of loyalty to Spain, the city of Coro. But, though Cajigal and Cebal-

los had been got out of the way, Boves remained to be dealt with—a far more serious proposition! Out of the llanos Attila now came again—as cruel and resourceful as ever, heading as big an army as had ever been under his orders.

At La Puerta—where Campo Elías had been crushed by Boves—Bolívar and the Asturian met in furious conflict. It proved as fatal to the Liberator as to the hater of Spain. Boves, galloping along the front of his troops, roaring orders to his thousands of centaurs, had never been more sinister and formidable—he seemed to hypnotize both those who fought for him and those pitted against him. Raging up and down the field of battle, reddened lance poised in his hand, he swept all before him.

In hundreds the men of Bolívar and Mariño were cut down. Freites, one of the bravest lieutenants of the Liberator, when he saw all was lost, drew his pistol and blew out his brains. Just as the first Venezuelan Republic had died when Miranda capitulated, now the Second Republic perished on the bloody field of La Puerta. Two members of its government, of Bolívar's "Cabinet," were killed there. The Dictator himself, with only a handful of riders, went galloping toward Carácas at the end of this day of horror and mourning for Venezuela, lucky to be alive.

The men of Boves, having driven their foes before them, turned, as always, to hideous massacre. Few prisoners were spared. One, Jalón, a close friend of Bolívar, was led before the Asturian.

"Dine with me," said Boves. After dinner, the host

called to an officer. "Hang this man," he ordered, pointing to Jalón.

No wonder Simon Bolívar said of Boves: "He was not nourished with woman's milk, but with the blood of tigers and of the furies of Hell!"

Again Boves appeared before Valencia, now held by Escalona with troops as brave as those of Urdaneta. But Escalona fought under an unluckier star. He was soon reduced to the main plaza, his ammunition gave out, his men were dying of thirst, only capitulation was left. Boves swore solemnly to spare the lives of the garrison; entering Valencia he repeated his oath before the altar of one of the city's churches. With the words scarcely off his lips, he gave out orders for wholesale execution.

Summoning the wives and daughters of some of the principal inhabitants to a grand dance, in honor of the end of the fighting, Boves joked and danced with them, told them how he loved peace and hated war, spurred the musicians on to play more lively melodies, drank the health of the ladies and their men folk.

While he was acting thus, officers kept entering the room to hold whispered conversations with him. Boves would excuse himself, draw aside a few paces, read notes brought him by these officers. Then he would give an order; the officers, saluting, would depart.

Each note was a request from Morales or some other subordinate to know what was to be done with this or that patriot, held a prisoner; each order from Boves was an order for the patriot's execution.

"Sorry to have kept you waiting," Boves would say to the ladies of Valencia, as he returned to their midst.

"But we military men are always busy, you know. On with the dance!" And he would joke with this lady, toast that one in a glass of wine—though he had just sent the father of one, the husband or son of the other, to face a firing squad.

"Play another jig, you lazy musicians!" shouted the jovial Boves. "Señora! Señorita! Your health!"

Another officer entered. "General Morales wishes to know—"

"Excuse me, ladies—" Whispering. A salute from the officer; the bang of a door.

"May I have this dance, señorita?"

Until far into the night fiddles squeaked, guitars tinkled, glasses clinked, dancers whirled and laughed, shots cracked outside.

Boves moved on Carácas. Things had gone too badly with Bolívar for him to risk another stand at La Victoria—or anywhere else, for the present.

He decided to abandon his native city. As soon as his decision became known, thousands of the people of the sorely-tried Venezuelan capital promptly resolved to go with him—so great was the terror inspired by the murderous Asturian.

With the remnants of his forces rescued from the fatal field of La Puerta, Bolívar marched out of Carácas and headed eastward, aiming to join the patriots there who were still in arms against Spain. Men, women and children of Carácas trudged alongside the soldiers. Delicately nurtured ladies of the aristocracy plodded beside workingwomen, proud hidalgos beside peons and slaves.

Rains made the roads well-nigh impassable, gar-

Retreat of Bolívar from Carácas when it was taken by Boves, from a painting by the Venezuelan, Tito Salas

ments were soon drenched, footwear water-logged. The suffering among the Caraqueños, unaccustomed to hardship, became acute.

Many gave up the fight and lay down to die by the roadside. Women, driven mad by suffering, jumped over the brink of precipices, to die in swift torrents far below; before the eyes of Bolívar mothers hurled their babies to death before taking the leap themselves. And all the while soldiers and civilians had to keep going, with bleeding feet, panting in their weariness, for otherwise they would be overtaken by the cruel soldiers of Boves, lusting for more murder.

At last the survivors of the "Emigration of 1814," as it is called in Venezuela, dragged themselves into Cumaná, Barcelona and other eastern towns.

Meanwhile Boves had entered Carácas, where, to the astonishment of everybody, he sternly forbade his soldiers to commit outrages on those of the inhabitants who had dared stay behind. Carácas, however, enjoyed this unexpected respite for only a short time. Hurrying eastward in the wake of Bolívar, Boves left the capital to the mercy of one of his subordinates, Quero, who soon began killing in the true Boves manner. The unhappy city, already nearly ruined by earthquake, disease and war, now rang to the shots of firing squads. Scores of inhabitants, accused of being implicated in the revolt against Spain, perished at the hands of Quero and his bloodthirsty henchmen.

Boves and Morales marched their troops into the eastern provinces, reddening their road with blood. Again Bolívar's situation became desperate. Yet, as if to shake his fist in the very face of fate, he actually sent an envoy

of the "Venezuelan Republic" to London to open relations with Great Britain! The step seemed ridiculous; but it was characteristic of the man. Adversity steeled him to greater endeavor; never was he so menacing to his foes as when seemingly crushed to the ground.

"The art of victory," he said, after his rout at La Puerta, "is to be learned from defeat!"

Bolívar and Bermúdez faced Morales at Aragua de Barcelona and inflicted upon him a temporary check, at the cost of hundreds of lives. There perished Carvajal, one of the bravest of the llaneros serving with the patriots. Of gigantic stature and limitless courage, he used to ride into battle holding a lance in each hand, guiding his horse with the reins held in his teeth.

Aragua de Barcelona was a setback for the Spaniards, but only for a short while.

The sun of Bolívar had set. There was no stopping Boves. Besides, the disasters suffered by the Liberator had shaken the faith of other Venezuelan leaders in him.

After all, they asked each other, was he the man to lead them to ultimate victory?—he who had been routed at La Puerta, forced to flee from Carácas? Some of them now turned upon him and Mariño, who had gone down to defeat with him at La Puerta, accusing them even of treason. There were high words between Bolívar and Mariño, on the one side, and Bermúdez, Piar and José Félix Ribas on the other. Yes, Ribas, Bolívar's uncle, he of the red Phrygian cap of liberty, the hero of the superb defense of La Victoria, had now turned on his nephew!

Finally, at the port of Carúpano, after coldness and insults from those arrayed against them, the Liberator, accompanied by Mariño, the fallen "Dictator of the East," was forced to board a vessel and put to sea. After an ineffectual attempt to persuade Arismendi, the patriot commander on the island of Margarita, to let them land, the two exiled chiefs left Venezuela behind them and set sail for Cartagena, the port in New Granada to which Bolívar had fled the year before, when the idea of invading and freeing his native land was simmering in his busy brain.

Well, he had invaded it and freed it, as he had thought—yet now, a mere twelvemonth later, it lay again under the heel of Spain and he was, seemingly, as helpless an exile as when he had left Carácas after the collapse of Miranda and the First Venezuelan Republic.

Boves made short work of those who stayed behind in eastern Venezuela. After a hideous massacre at Cumaná, he flung himself on the last army of patriots, gathered together by José Félix Ribas and Bermúdez at Urica. There he inflicted on them a bloody defeat. Bermúdez fled eastward, with a handful of men. Ribas, forced to hide in the hills, was betrayed by a servant, executed, and his head—still wearing the Phrygian cap—exposed in a cage at the gate of Carácas.

But Boves had run his course. Fate, having used him as an instrument and a terrible one, was tired of the ferocious Asturian. At the pinnacle of success, with his squadrons sweeping the field of Urica and cutting down the desperate cohorts of Bermúdez and Ribas, he him-

self, lance in hand, exhorting his soldiers to shed more and more of the "American" blood which he hated, suddenly encountered an obscure Venezuelan horseman, a mere boy. This lad, without an inkling of whom he had before him, drove his lance through Boves and stretched him dead on the field of his last victory.

He is buried beside the church at Urica; they still show the bell which was tolled for his funeral. "It is difficult to say which was the worst scourge for Venezuela, the earthquake or Boves," wrote a Venezuelan chronicler of those bloody days.

Chapter VIII

LOW TIDE

LOW tide for Simon Bolívar!

Driven from his native shores by jeering comrades-in-arms; such of them as dared face the Spaniard without him crushingly routed. Venezuela turned into a land of desolation and death; the red-and-yellow banner of Spain waving over ruined towns and devastated fields.

Boves, to be sure, is no more; but Morales, his ferocious successor, no matter which way he looks, can descry no foe worthy of the name. Here and there a guerrilla leader, with a handful of men, still cries "Viva la Libertad!" But the cry is well-nigh inaudible. In the autumn of this fatal year of 1814 independence seems as remote for Bolívar's native land as when the ill-starred Miranda had capitulated to Monteverde two years before.

The great majority of the inhabitants of Venezuela, all too lukewarm toward liberty even when it seemed close at hand, have now renewed allegiance to the Spanish king. The cause of freedom, never popular, looks as good as dead. Bolívar, shorn of soldiers, power and money, is once more an exile. His title "The Liberator" to which he still clings, sounds like a cruel mockery.

Yet adversity, at its blackest, fails to cow him. In-

stead, it draws out the essential greatness of the man; it is as steel to the flint of his courage. Sailing along the coast of Venezuela he knows not whither, surrounded by half-despairing companions, only too inclined to blame him for all their ills, he never flinches. He meets what looks like political and military annihilation with a contemptuous flash of the eye, a superb toss of the head.

It is as if he guesses what lies in store for him. He seems to scent the laurels of the future, to penetrate with his mind's eyes the shroud drawn by fate over the dazzling tomorrows of his life.

In conversation with him, Mariño, still mournfully bearing the empty title, "Dictator of the East," gets gleams of the clairvoyance buoying up his fellow exile.

"He would draw vivid pictures of the triumphs we were destined to see," Mariño told friends long afterwards. "The reconquest of Venezuela appeared to him such a matter of course that, talking to him, I seemed to be back in my native land again!"

Craftily endeavoring to shake Bolívar's sublime faith in his lucky star, Mariño reminds him of the desperate plight they are in. No use! Put thus mercilessly to the test, Bolívar rises superior to that plight, loses it from sight, fixes his gaze on a glorious future, actually visible to him, to the exclusion of the mournful past and seemingly hopeless present. At such times, according to Mariño, "he would have convinced the very stones that he was going to win out." Fate is cruelly testing Simon Bolívar, trying to find out whether he is indeed of the mettle of the world's great men. And he—scorned, ex-

iled, apparently a prey to the dreams of a madman—is superbly meeting the test.

On September 25, 1814, Bolívar, with Mariño and the rest of the little band of Venezuelans thrust from their native land as failures in the struggle for freedom, landed at the old walled seaport of Cartagena, in New Granada, the very place chosen by him as a starting-point for his invasion of Venezuela the year before.

He found in command there his old enemy of pre-invasion days, Colonel Castillo—a greater obstacle in his path than Labatut, the Frenchman who had sought to thwart him in 1813.

No favor or help was to be hoped for from Castillo. So Bolívar set out for Tunja, the seat of the republican government of New Granada, which was still maintaining itself precariously against Spain. Having been commissioned by this government to reconquer Venezuela from the Spaniards, he felt it behooved him to explain why he had allowed Boves and his satellites to snatch Venezuela from his grasp.

On the way he encountered the troops of Urdaneta, who, forced from western Venezuela after the rout of his chief, had also taken refuge on New Granadan soil. Urdaneta's soldiers, still admirers of the Liberator even after his misfortunes, showed an inclination to disregard their general's authority and place themselves under Bolívar.

But the latter, rising above all pettiness, sternly reproved them. In his reproof he once more gave evidence of a vision piercing the veils of local prejudice, fixed on freedom not alone for Venezuela and New Granada but for every other Spanish colony in the New World.

"Soldiers!" he cried, "do not repeat such acts of disobedience! If you love me, prove your love by remaining faithful to discipline and to your commander. I am but a soldier myself, coming to offer my services to this sister nation. Our fatherland is America, our foes are the Spaniards, our emblem is independence, our cause is liberty!"

The troops cheered wildly for Bolívar, for Urdaneta, for New Granada. They promised to be insubordinate no more. Bolívar had triumphantly met another test devised by fate. A greater man than before, he continued on his way to Tunja.

Camilo Torres, president of the republican government of New Granada, who had always admired him, proved that Bolívar's misfortunes had not impaired his admiration in the slightest. He sent the exile a splendid horse, magnificently caparisoned. But the fugitive waved it aside. "No gifts for me!" he said, "until I have reported on the mission with which this government entrusted me." Before the New Granadan Congress he related the tale of his victories and subsequent defeats. Camilo Torres, stretching out his hand, exclaimed: "General Bolívar, your country is not dead as long as your sword exists! The Congress of New Granada will protect you because it is satisfied with what you have done. As a military commander, you have been unfortunate—but you are a great man!"

The first mission entrusted to Bolívar after he had presented himself before the government at Tunja was most distasteful to one wrapped up heart and soul in the fight to oust the Spanish masters of South America. Instead of leading more regiments of patriots against

the soldiers of the Spanish king, he was instructed to march on Bogotá, the principal city of New Granada, and drive from it a republican government which had been set up there in defiance alike of Spain and of the Tunja government.

Carrying out his instructions with celerity and efficiency, Bolívar appeared outside Bogotá with a small force, attacked the troops holding the city, and, after three days of street fighting, forced his foes to capitulate. Thereupon negotiations were opened between the republican authorities at Bogotá, just worsted by the Venezuelan, and those at Tunja which resulted in the acknowledgment by the former of the Tunja government. Once more Bolívar had won a complete victory.

Having obtained permission from the grateful New Granadan government—now transferred to Bogotá—to start a campaign against the Spaniards on the coast of the Caribbean, Bolívar repaired to Cartagena, his intention being to capture the ports of Santa Marta and Rio Hacha and then march again into Venezuela. Defeat there had merely made him more determined than ever not to rest until the last Spaniard had been driven from the soil of his native land. But at Cartagena he got into another lot of difficulties with his old enemy, Castillo, who was still in command. Rather than aid Bolívar, Castillo actually refused to obey the orders of the New Granadan government. When Bolívar sought to enter Cartagena, Castillo refused him permission. Blinded by personal animosity, he was willing to jeopardize the success of the cause of freedom rather than help in any way the man whom he hated.

The soldiers of Castillo and Bolívar clashed again

and again. The man who thought only of liberating South America from Spain was once more engaged in bloody combat with other South Americans. Fresh from attacking fellow patriots at Bogotá, he was now arrayed against them outside the walls of Cartagena. Convinced finally that there was no hope of reconciliation with Castillo and that nothing could be worse, in the long run, for the cause of independence than the continuance of the bickerings between that officer and himself, Bolívar resolved to lay down his command. His dreams of again delivering Venezuela were not to become realities as yet! With the sanction of the republican authorities at Bogotá, he took leave of his troops and, on the eighth of May, 1815, again sailed away into exile. This time he headed for the island of Jamaica, in the West Indies, then as now under the British flag.

"My one ambition," he wrote to Camilo Torres, "is to bring liberty to my fellow citizens. My love for American independence has already impelled me to make various sacrifices, both in peace and in war. Never shall I fail to make such sacrifices, since he who relinquishes everything, in order to be useful to his country, loses nothing, and gains all that he relinquishes!"

Low tide for Simon Bolívar! The lowest ebb! Exiled again. In Jamaica, accompanied by only a few faithful friends. The independence of his native land and the rest of South America as hopeless a dream, seemingly, as was ever harbored in the brain of a madman. Pursued by implacable foes. Dogged, even, by assassins. One night, seeking to forget his misfortunes, Bolívar steals out of his humble quarters in a Jamaican lodging

house, bent on amorous adventure. A negro, entering the room he has just left, steals up to a hammock in which a man is lying. Thinking it is Bolívar, he drives a knife through the heart of the sleeping man. But the man is not Bolívar, but a friend, who, coming to talk with him and finding the room empty, has stretched himself in his friend's hammock, to await his return—thus saving Bolívar's life.

Penniless! "I have not a dollar in the world," he writes to a friendly Englishman. The erstwhile rich hidalgo of Carácas, he who has toured Europe in princely fashion, met a King and a Queen, been ushered into the presence of the Pope at Rome, is now forced to borrow money to buy food!

Low tide for Simon Bolívar!

And what news from Venezuela and New Granada! Ferdinand VII, restored to the throne of Spain, rid of the troops of Napoleon, who had upheld, with their bayonets, the shaky throne of Joseph Bonaparte, is now bent on stamping out the last vestiges of resistance to Spanish rule in Spanish America. Never since the defection of the colonies from the motherland has such an expedition been equipped against them as the one which sails, early in 1815, for the New World.

Ten thousand troops of the line! Veterans of the wars against Napoleon, comrades of the Britons of Wellington. Thirty-four warships. Seventy transports. Siege trains. Enormous stocks of ammunition. In command, Don Pablo Morillo, a Spaniard who has won the admiration of Lord Wellington for his valor and military skill. Indeed, Wellington, when questioned as to who should be sent to pacify Spanish America once for all,

has suggested Morillo. After subjugating Venezuela and New Granada, Morillo has been instructed to transfer his army southward, crushing out every vestige of rebellion, until he reaches Buenos Aires, in the remote south.

A grandiose plan of revenge and reconquest! And Simon Bolívar penniless and powerless, in Jamaica! Black indeed is the horizon for the cause of South American freedom.

No wonder the exile grows thin and pale, no wonder he looks with haggard eyes out over the waters of the Caribbean, southward toward his native land, apparently about to be offered up, defenseless and trembling, to the regiments of Don Pablo Morillo. No wonder the British governor of Jamaica, sympathetic with Bolívar but unable, for political reasons, to aid him, says of him, as he contemplates those burning eyes, that prematurely wrinkled brow, those sunken cheeks: "The flame has absorbed the oil!"

Low tide for Simon Bolívar!

But what of it? He stands undaunted. Adversity ennobles, poverty fortifies, him. Borrowing, pursued by assassins, abandoned by friends, insulted and proscribed, the flame of his indomitable nature shines undimmed.

He lives in the glorious dreams surging tumultuously through his brain, draws from them sustenance and courage at the darkest minutes of the blackest hours, tells others about them, in the glowing language of an inspired poet!

An Englishman, Mr. Hyslop, attracted by the pluck

shown by Bolívar despite the desperate state of his fortunes, writes him a letter asking for a statement of his beliefs and ambitions. He wishes to understand the reasons why he is thus impelled to defy mighty Spain and thereby lose fortune, high position and, well-nigh, life itself. And Bolívar, forgetting poverty and peril, driving back, as with an imperious wave of the hand, the adverse fate apparently about to close in on him and throttle him, sits down to write an answer to Mr. Hyslop.

Straightway he is in the bright firmament of his dreams, a free man among free men! Gone is the haggard, dollar-begging exile! In his stead comes the seer into the future, the forger of hard facts from dim dreams, the prophet of splendid tomorrows.

"If justice decides the conflicts of mankind, success must crown our efforts, because the destiny of America has been irrevocably determined. The tie binding us to Spain has been cut. . . . The hatred we feel for Spain is greater than the sea separating us from her! It would be less difficult to unite our two continents than to reconcile Americans and Spaniards! . . ."

He clenches his fists, his eyes flash, as he thinks of his victories, of his daring invasion of Venezuela, of the cup of triumph cruelly dashed from his lips. Courage! It is darkest just before dawn! Again he seizes his pen.

"The veil has been torn away! We have seen the light, yet there are those who would hurl us again into the darkness! Chains have been broken, we have tasted freedom, yet our enemies seek to enslave us anew! That is why America is fighting with desperation—and rarely has desperation failed to win out!"

In imagination he sees the vast battlefield of Spanish America, stretching now all the way from Mexico to Cape Horn, and hope flares up in him and, pressing his lips together, he pushes forward the pen to paint for his English friend the dream-picture shining in his mind:

"The warlike state formed from the provinces of the River Plate has driven the Spaniards from its territory, marched its victorious soldiers into Upper Peru, incited Arequipa to rebellion, sowed disquiet among the royalists of Lima. In that state about one million people are already in the enjoyment of liberty!

"Chile, with 800,000 inhabitants, is fighting against the foes seeking to enslave her. . . .

"Peru, with 1,500,000 people, is, beyond a doubt, the land most firmly bound to the power of Spain, the most exploited in the name of the Spanish king. Yet, there is no doubt that Peru is not tranquil, that Spain cannot dam the torrent threatening most of the Peruvian provinces.

"New Granada, which may be called the heart of America, is under a republican government with the exception of the territory of Quito—held with the greatest difficulty by the enemy—and the provinces of Panama and Santa Marta. . . . Two million and a half inhabitants, scattered through those regions, are now defending them against the Spanish army of General Morillo. . . .

"As for heroic and unhappy Venezuela, events there have happened so rapidly and the devastation suffered has been such that the land is reduced almost to total indigence and has been converted almost in its entirety

into a grim waste, though it was one of the most beautiful of the regions forming the pride of America.

"Venezuela's tyrants hold sway over a desert, they oppress naught but miserable remnants of the population, which, having escaped death, drag along a precarious existence. Indeed, all that survive are a few women, children and aged persons. Most of the Venezuelan men have perished rather than be slaves; those still alive are fighting desperately in the fields and towns of the interior, resolved to resist until they are killed or have succeeded in driving into the sea those who, insatiable in their lust for blood and crime, are worthy rivals of the first monsters who exterminated the aboriginal inhabitants of America.

"Venezuela had about one million inhabitants, but without fear of overstatement I may say that one-fourth of them have succumbed to cataclysms of nature, the sword, hunger or pestilence, or have been forced to emigrate. Excepting those killed by earthquakes, all these have perished as a result of war."

Again the eagle glance of Simon Bolívar sweeps over embattled and devastated South America; again he seeks to describe the scene of combat and ruin to his English friend:

"The picture I have drawn shows a battlefield two thousand leagues long and nine hundred broad. There 16,000,000 Americans are defending their rights, or are under the heel of Spain, who, though at one time the greatest empire in the world, is now, in her decadence, incapable of dominating the New World or even of maintaining herself in the Old. . . ."

Dreams of free nations, happy under wise governments, crowd before Bolívar's vision:

"What has happened in South America proves that perfectly representative institutions are not suited to our character, customs and present attainments. In Carácas, the party spirit was born in associations, assemblies and popular elections, resulting in our being delivered again into slavery. Just as Venezuela was the American republic where political institutions took on the most advanced form, she was also the best example of the unsuitability to our budding nations of the democratic-federal form of government. In New Granada the excessive power accorded to provincial governments has brought that wealthy land to the wretched state to which she is now reduced.

"Until South Americans have acquired the talents and political virtues characteristic of our brothers in North America, all genuinely democratic systems of government, instead of being advantageous to us, will, I fear, result in our ruin. Unfortunately, we seem far from possessing the aforesaid qualities to the degree required; instead, we are dominated by the vicious traits acquired under the régime of a nation like Spain, which has excelled only in pride, ambition, revengefulness and cupidity.

" 'It is more difficult,' says Montesquieu, 'to rescue a nation from servitude than to subjugate a free nation.'

"I wish, above all else, to see the formation in America of the greatest nation in the world—the greatest not so much because of its size as because of its glory and liberty!

"Though I aspire to see a perfect government in my

native land, I cannot bring myself to the belief that, under present conditions, the New World can be governed as a Great Republic; since this is impossible, I dare not desire it. Even less do I wish to see a monarchy in America, because such a thing, besides being useless, is also impossible.

"Abuses now existing would not be reformed and our regeneration would be fruitless. The nations of America need the care of paternal governments capable of curing the scars and wounds of despotism and war. . . .

"Supposing the Isthmus of Panama were the central point for all the nations of this vast continent, would they not continue to be weak and plunged in disorder? Any one government capable of giving life, animating, starting the whole mechanism of public prosperity, chastising, educating and perfecting the New World, would have to possess the gifts of a god—or, if not that, the attainments and virtues of all men. . . .

"Mr. de Pradt * has wisely divided America into fifteen or seventeen independent nations, governed by the same number of monarchs. I agree with him as to the first part, because America demands the creation of seventeen nations; as for the second, though it might easily be accomplished, it would be of less use. *I do not believe in having American monarchies.* . . .

"From all the above, the following may be deduced: the American provinces are fighting to free themselves; they will eventually win freedom; some of them will make themselves into federal or centralized republics; in certain large sections of the continent it is well-nigh

* An eighteenth century writer.

inevitable that monarchies will be established. . . . It will not be easy to consolidate a great monarchy; as for consolidating a great republic, it will be impossible. . . .

"Would it not be splendid if the Isthmus of Panama could be to us what the Isthmus of Corinth was to the Greeks? May we some day be fortunate enough to install there an august Congress composed of representatives of republics, kingdoms and empires, that may deal with and discuss the high interests of peace and war with the nations of the other three parts of the world! . . ."

Thus the penniless exile, the inspired dreamer of splendid dreams! Much of what he pictured, in his poverty and weakness, there in his humble room in the Jamaican lodging house, has come true to a degree proving his prescience positively uncanny. And the fact that the rest has not come true, is something to bring shame to those natives of the American continent who have lived and ruled and thought after Bolívar was no more, without being able to turn his dreams into facts.

Chapter IX

THE TIDE TURNS

WHILE Simon Bolívar, an exile in Jamaica, was borrowing money and dreaming dreams, the formidable expedition of Don Pablo Morillo was at its work of reconquering Venezuela and New Granada for the King of Spain.

With his imposing array of warships and transports, over the sides of which peered veterans of Spanish line regiments who had confronted the great Napoleon himself and some of his most redoubtable generals, Morillo arrived off the eastern coast of Venezuela early in April, 1815. The remnants of Venezuela's fighters for freedom, who had survived the defeats inflicted upon them by Boves and Morales, were powerless to oppose him. Arismendi, the brave commander of the patriots on the island of Margarita, temporarily gave up the struggle. Bermúdez boarded a small vessel and daringly sailed past ship after ship of Morillo's fleet, shaking his fist at the Spaniards and pouring foul language upon them, until his little craft had borne him to safety before the astonished enemy could lay hands on him.

From Margarita and eastern Venezuela Morillo proceeded to Carácas, where he took over the duties of Captain-General of Venezuela from Moxó, who had been representing King Ferdinand in the Venezuelan

capital. Morillo then sailed away to Cartagena, in New Granada—that port of ill omen to Simon Bolívar.

Despite the anarchy reigning among the patriots there, Cartagena put up a splendid resistance. For one hundred and six days Morillo's veterans besieged the old walled stronghold. Only when it was reduced to the last extremity of hunger and disease, only after the Spanish guns had turned it into a heap of ruins, did the heroic defenders yield to the foe. When Morillo's men at last entered Cartagena, they found it a desert; corpses rotted on the streets by hundreds; the survivors were so weak they could scarcely keep their feet. Six thousand soldiers and civilians had died.

Morillo behaved with generosity and humanity toward his brave enemies. Morales, however, the old partner of Boves, whose troops had been incorporated with those brought by the new commander from Spain, showed that his methods remained the same as in the days of his association with the ferocious Asturian. Having agreed to spare the lives of those who gave themselves up to him, Morales promptly decreed the assassination of about four hundred of the people of Cartagena, including women, children and old men, who had ventured from their hiding places in and near the city, trusting to his promise.

Despite being a merciful man compared with Morales, Morillo also ordered a number of executions. Among those shot by him was Castillo, Bolívar's irreconcilable enemy.

From Cartagena Morillo marched on Bogotá, which he captured. Resistance to Spain was thus almost stamped out in both Venezuela and New Granada.

In Bogotá Morillo's clemency forsook him. He ordered the execution of scores of the leading citizens of the land. All were lined up before firing squads and shot through the back like criminals. Among those who perished thus was Camilo Torres, president of the ill-fated New Granadan republic, who had consistently admired and befriended Bolívar. Another was Francisco José Caldas, an eminent mathematician and engineer. In all, during the dark year of 1816, Morillo caused the shooting of more than one hundred New Granadan patriots, many belonging to the best families in the country.

Throughout New Granada and Venezuela the revolution against Spain seemed crushed beyond hope of resurrection. Only a few scattered guerrillas, led by irreconcilable foes of Spain, still tried desperately to keep alive the fight for freedom. But the great mass of the people had no sympathy with such obduracy. Venezuela and New Granada were two deserts, soaked in blood and strewn with ruins, over which the ferocious satellites of King Ferdinand VII enforced his royal authority almost without encountering a whisper of protest.

Yet Simon Bolívar still lived!

After vainly asking aid of the British authorities in Jamaica, Bolívar found a valuable coadjutor in Luis Brión, a wealthy native of the island of Curaçao, who furnished several vessels for another venture against the Spaniards controlling the South American mainland. At the head of this little flotilla, the indefatigable Bolívar sailed away to Haiti, the West Indian republic of the blacks, which had shortly before shaken off the yoke of

Napoleon. Amid the dusky inhabitants of the island he found efficacious help. Pétion, the Haitian president, proved himself heart and soul in sympathy; as a condition, however, for coöperation he asked Bolivar to promise to free the slaves in his native land as soon as he had the requisite power. This Bolívar promised willingly.

Together with a number of other indomitable Venezuelan patriots, including Santiago Mariño, who had accompanied him to Cartagena, also Bermúdez and Piar, who, having helped drive him into exile, had subsequently been forced to flee themselves from Venezuela, Bolívar set sail for his native shores. He had, in all, two hundred and fifty men, but arms and ammunition for a far larger force.

Landing on the island of Margarita early in May, 1816, the Liberator promptly proclaimed the foundation of another Venezuelan republic, with himself as Supreme Chief. Faithful to his promise to Pétion, he issued a second proclamation, emancipating all slaves in Venezuela.

Failing to capture the city of Cumaná on the mainland, Bolívar sailed westward to Ocumare de la Costa, where he disembarked part of his force, now four or five times as large as at the start, under the Scotch adventurer, MacGregor. But Morales, the cruel and efficient Spanish general, was ready for them. He defeated MacGregor's vanguard a few miles inland. Bolívar, hearing that Morales was on the very outskirts of Ocumare, made off in haste with his flotilla, leaving MacGregor to fend for himself. The Scot managed to cut his way through Morales' army and lead a dar-

ing march across the valleys of Aragua to eastern Venezuela.

Meanwhile Bolívar, returning to Haiti, organized another expedition which, convoyed by the faithful Brión, again set out for Venezuela. Shortly afterward Bolívar landed on the South American mainland, never again to leave it for foreign shores.

At Asunción, a little town on the island of Margarita, an assembly of the Venezuelans in rebellion against Spain proclaimed the Third Venezuelan Republic and chose Simon Bolívar as its Supreme Chief. This was on May 16, 1816. But there were several among those thus acknowledging him whose loyalty was only lukewarm.

Santiago Mariño, like Bolívar a member of a patrician family, was ambitious to play the leading part. So, also, was Piar. Arismendi, too, the antagonist of Morillo's troops on Margarita, had already shown and was again to show restiveness under Bolívar's authority. For the present, however, Bolívar's capacity for imposing his will on others triumphed over every obstacle in his path. After he had made a threat to resign the Supreme Chieftainship, the Assembly confirmed him in his new powers and he went ahead with the conduct of both civil and military affairs, undeterred by the smolderings of opposition. But he had by no means heard the last of his rivals, especially of Mariño and Piar.

For the moment, however, they grumblingly bowed to his commands. This left him free to carry out a plan he had formed, a plan marked with the true Bolivarian stamp of audacity—easily one of the most striking and,

in its fruits, one of the most important of his whole career.

Instead of seeking to continue the war for independence in eastern Venezuela, where the Third Venezuelan Republic had just been set up, or in the region around Carácas and Valencia, where fate had already proved so cruel to his armies, Bolívar resolved to establish his headquarters and the capital of the republic on the river Orinoco. This great stream, flowing majestically toward the ocean, hundreds of miles south of the Venezuelan coast on the Caribbean, provides a most excellent water highway between eastern and western Venezuela, a most excellent base for military operations against a foe holding Carácas and the Venezuelan coast line.

Once established somewhere on the Orinoco and in control of navigation on its broad waters and those of its tributaries, Bolívar knew that he would be able to send troops at will from one point to another on their banks without molestation from the enemy, to use the Orinoco as a base for incursions northward into the parts of the country still held by the Spaniards. With the Orinoco under his control, Bolívar realized, with the inspiration of true genius, that he would be a far more formidable foe than if he sought to tempt fortune again on the fields where Boves, Morales and their sanguinary subordinates had so crushingly routed him and the most valiant of his comrades-in-arms.

When he reached the northern bank of the Orinoco, he found that Piar, who had preceded him, had already opened up operations against the Spanish forces stationed along the great river. At San Félix Piar had won a decisive victory over La Torre, sent by Morillo to

fight the patriots in the Orinoco region; only by spurring his horse to headlong speed had La Torre been able to save himself from death or capture. Piar, as cruel as he was brave, promptly massacred all the European prisoners who had fallen into his hands—a vivid reminder that "war to the death" tactics still lived in Venezuela.

Soon there came another reminder. Piar had sent troops to occupy the missions founded by Spanish monks to convert the Indians in the almost unexplored territory along the river Caroní, south of the Orinoco. The object of this expedition was to appropriate the supplies of all kinds stored up by the monks. Some of the latter resisted, others yielded without a fight.

One of Piar's officers had rounded up twenty-two monks and was taking them as prisoners toward the headquarters of his commander. He sent for instructions what to do with them. The answer came back: "Send them to the Divina Pastora."

"Divina Pastora" is a settlement on the Orinoco; but the words also mean, literally translated, "The Divine Shepherdess." Understanding the order to mean that he was to send the monks to the "Divine Shepherdess" —i. e., to the other world—the officer promptly had them lined up and shot.

Bolívar was greatly incensed when he heard of it; he demanded explanations from Piar, who made them, but could not conceal from his chief that the very fact that his officer could so interpret an order was evidence of the barbarous methods being employed by him. Long ashamed of his "War to the Death" proclamation and anxious to have it forgotten, Bolívar would doubtless

have liked to give Piar a good reprimand for the "Divina Pastora" incident. But his authority over the ambitious mulatto was not at all firmly established. So he kept quiet. Both Piar and the officer who had murdered the unfortunate Spanish monks went unpunished.

Operating with Piar along the lower Orinoco, Bolívar had one of the narrowest escapes of his life. Riding along the "Caño de Casacoima," one of the mouths of the great stream, he became separated from the troops accompanying him and, with only a handful of followers, suddenly came upon a considerable Spanish force.

The Spaniards promptly opened fire. Bolívar and his companions, amid a shower of lead, leaped into the stream and started swimming for the opposite bank. Gaining it, they lay concealed for hours in the jungle, while the Spaniards searched high and low for them. So imminent was the danger at one moment that Bolívar drew a dagger from its sheath at his side and tore open his shirt, prepared to stab himself to death rather than fall into the hands of the enemy.

One of his companions, a faithful servant, both while swimming in the water and while crouching in the jungle, kept in his hand a large knife.

"Why don't you throw that away?" somebody asked. "It only hinders you." To which the man replied: "I am keeping it to kill the General [pointing to Bolívar] if the Spaniards get to him."

While hiding in the jungle, in peril of being captured at any moment, Bolívar calmly talked to his companions, in like dire straints, of his dreams of a free South America. "Some day," he told them, "we shall

march to New Granada, free Quito, conquer and liberate Peru, lead our armies even to Potosí!"

Crouching, as they were, like hunted beasts, in the underbrush of the Orinoco wilderness, with bloodthirsty Spanish searchers audible all around them, these words struck Bolívar's hearers as the ravings of a lunatic.

"Now we are indeed lost!" whispered one of his companions to another. "The Liberator has gone crazy!"

Eventually they succeeded in eluding the Spaniards and getting back, without further mishap, to the camp of Piar and the rest of the patriots.

Fortunately for Bolívar, Piar had deferred for the time being his dreams of supreme command and was applying himself, with energy and good fortune, to the reduction of the Spanish garrisons along the river. Joining forces with his active lieutenant, Bolívar sailed up-stream to Angostura,* the principal town on the Orinoco, to which he laid siege. The small Spanish garrison, surprised at the sudden attack and too weak to offer effectual resistance, was soon forced to surrender.

At once Angostura was proclaimed the capital of the Third Venezuelan Republic—Carácas, the Venezuelan metropolis, being still in inglorious subjection to the Spaniards.

Meanwhile, on the island of Margarita, the islanders, tired of the oppression of the officers left there by Morillo, had revolted and, led by Arismendi, were putting up a superb resistance against the trained regiments of Ferdinand VII. So heroic was the conduct of

* Now called Ciudad Bolívar.

the Margariteños, so effective the blows they dealt the Spaniards, that in after years the Venezuelan Congress decreed that the official name of the island should be "New Sparta" in memory of the tenacious resistance of its people, veritable modern Spartans, to the soldiers of Spain.

Morillo, who often showed generous admiration for his enemies, wrote home to the Spanish government that the natives of Margarita, pitted against his troops, were "giants, fighting like tigers, exposing themselves to fire and bayonets with a courage such as is not to be found among the best troops in the world!"

While Arismendi and his Margariteños were thus distinguishing themselves in the defense of their island home, Bolívar, installed at his capital of Angostura, on the Orinoco, proceeded with his usual energy to have drawn up a provisional statute for the government of the Third Venezuelan Republic.

Again he eschewed the federal form of administration; he had had enough, in the days of Miranda, of a gathering of idealists from far-away provinces proclaiming impossible Utopian theories with the enemy thundering at the gates. Now, as before, he sought to strengthen the central executive branch of his government at the expense of the federal idea.

Obstacles suddenly arose, however, which threatened to thwart him in the full tide of his progress as statesman and military chief. Mariño, left behind on the eastern coast of Venezuela, convoked an assembly which declared at an end the Third Venezuelan Republic, from which Bolívar derived his authority, and proclaimed an entirely new republic, with Mariño at its

head. Directly flouting Bolívar's theories of government, Mariño and his satellites laid stress on the idea of federation.

However, it was mostly talk. Still able to count on the adherence of Piar, Bolívar, from the new capital of Venezuela at Angostura, sternly called on Mariño to cease his machinations, acknowledge the authority of the government at Angostura and join forces with it against the common foe.

Mariño, for all his soaring ambition, was by no means untractable; he soon realized that Bolívar was the better man, that further opposition to him was merely to play into the hands of the Spaniards. The republic of which he was the head died an inglorious death almost at its birth, and Santiago Mariño, stifling once more his feeling of rivalry, bowed to the dominating will of Simon Bolívar.

Pleased at the comparative ease with which he had downed his ambitious young rival, Bolívar decided not to punish Mariño for what had been dangerously close to treason. This was wise. His authority as head of the republic at Angostura was hardly such as to justify stern measures against a man who, himself, had backing sufficient to give him almost equal power. So Bolívar decided to let bygones be bygones. Mariño continued in command of the patriot forces on the eastern coast of Venezuela.

Piar, however, proved a harder nut to crack. The mulatto had long chafed under the authority of Bolívar —rendered doubly hateful to him by the fact that his chief was a "mantuano," a scion of a noble family of Carácas, long accustomed to haughty superiority over

people of colored blood, whereas he himself was a mulatto and, as such, rated hopelessly below any mantuano, for all his military ability and success. The flame of Piar's ambition had been fanned by his recent brilliant victory at San Félix. Why should the victor of San Félix acknowledge the leadership of one who had been repeatedly worsted by the Spaniards? Long before, Piar had plotted against Bolívar; now, with his new laurels urging him to decisive action, he openly conspired to wrest from his superior the supreme authority. He sought to make the coming test of strength a class war by fomenting discontent among the "pardos," the men of mixed blood in the patriot forces, by urging them to overthrow supercilious sprigs of the upper classes like Bolívar and erect a government of their own.

Bolívar met the machinations of Piar with his usual energy. It soon became quite clear to the ambitious mulatto that his rival was too strongly intrenched in power; indeed, Bolívar's countermeasures were so effective that Piar, far from attempting any actual coup, realized very soon that it was a case of saving his own skin before it should be too late.

Abandoning all his plotting, he fled from the Orinoco region, making for the north. But officers sent after him by Bolívar captured him before he could make good his escape.

With Piar Bolívar decided to be ruthless. He had let off Mariño with a reprimand; continued clemency might prove a boomerang to himself and the struggling Third Republic. So he had Piar haled before a military Tribunal. After due deliberation, it sentenced him to death.

In the presence of Bolívar and all the republican troops, Piar was shot at Angostura for "insubordination, desertion, sedition and conspiracy."

When Simon Bolívar went to England in 1810, to plead the cause of the South Americans with the British government, it will be remembered that he was accompanied by Luis López Méndez, like himself a scion of a leading Venezuelan family. Finding futile all efforts to move the British from neutrality, Bolívar returned to Venezuela with Miranda—to meet the ups and downs of fortune recounted in the preceding chapters.

López Méndez, however, remained in London. Taking up his headquarters in the house where Miranda had, for twelve years, plotted to overthrow the Spanish domination of Venezuela and the rest of Latin America, he kept actively at work as the official representative of the Venezuelan Republic in Great Britain. At times that republic was nothing but a name, but he stuck manfully to his post. While Bolívar was fighting Spain on the battlefield or borrowing funds for his daily meals as a hunted exile, López Méndez did all he could in London to keep the merits of the cause for which Bolívar was suffering before the eyes of the British. He wrote newspaper articles; he sent petitions to Cabinet Ministers; he plotted; he spent a large part of his private fortune —for how was the alternately struggling and defunct Republic of Venezuela to send him funds? In short, he proved himself, though far from the bloody battlefields on which Bolívar was fighting, a gallant and indefatigable soldier in the cause of South American independence.

Now he was to be rewarded for his long waiting; a genuinely important rôle was to be apportioned to him.

From the outset of the struggle against Spain Bolívar had been aided by foreign soldier-adventurers, mostly English, Scotch or Irish, of whose prowess and loyalty the Liberator conceived a most flattering opinion. Now, at the head of a genuine republican government, with a real capital at Angostura, with recruits steadily flowing in, he decided that, instead of relying in a haphazard way on help from such foreign fighters as individuals, the time had come to attract them in large numbers to his banners and thus allow the infant republic to avail itself of their bravery and invaluable experience as fighters in the Napoleonic Wars.

So he wrote to López Méndez in London, authorizing him to enlist, in the name of the Venezuelan Republic, as many veterans as possible, to promise them higher rank in the armies embattled against the Spanish masters of South America than they had had when fighting Napoleon, and to give them a pledge, as Venezuela's representative, that they would receive a rate of payment, accompanied by certain bonuses, calculated to tempt them to face the hardships and perils of campaigning in the New World.

López Méndez applied himself with enthusiasm to his task. The time was peculiarly favorable for the success of his endeavors. The end of the Napoleonic Wars had left thousands of officers and soldiers without martial employment. As the British forces occupying France after Waterloo were steadily reduced, more and more of those who had helped conquer the French Emperor drifted back to their native land, in a quandary as to

how they were to live. It would have been bad enough for them had the times been prosperous—after Waterloo, however, a period of dire depression had fallen upon Britain. Everywhere there was unemployment; men sought in vain for jobs; beggars thronged the streets. What chance had men who excelled only in the arts of war to find work when those skilled in the arts of peace were starving?

No wonder, then, that the promises of López Méndez, offering, as they did, not only prompt employment but employment of exactly the kind to which war veterans were suited, were most eagerly snapped up by the idle heroes of the Peninsula and Waterloo!

It was in May, 1817, that he began in earnest his work of enlisting foreign helpers for Simon Bolívar. In scores, hungry for further fighting, the veterans hurried to the house where Miranda had plotted, where López Méndez now lived—among them men with names destined to live in glory with those of the native battlers for South American emancipation. Soon López Méndez had created a squad of colonels—Gustavus Hippisley, future hater and chronicler of Bolívar; Henry Wilson, Donald Macdonald, Robert Skeene. Promissory notes were lavishly signed by the Venezuelan representative; army contractors bid hungrily for the honor of supplying arms, munitions, food, accoutrements.

Hippisley set to work organizing the "First Venezuelan Lancers," Wilson the "First Venezuelan Hussars." Quite forgetting the tropical heat and primitive living conditions which they were to face, the Hussars were decked out—as Hippisley himself recounts in his chronicle—in "dark green jacket with scarlet collar,

lapels and cuffs, figured gold lace around the collars and cuffs, an ornamental Austrian knot on the arm, a lace girdle, and dark green trousers edged with similar gold lace down the sides, crimson sash and Wellington boots. The officers had similar gorgeous raiment, with the addition of a blue camlet cloak lined with green baize."

Wilson's men strutted about garbed in scarlet jackets with light blue facings and gold lace pipings, and scarlet pantaloons with a broad gold stripe for full dress, and a similar uniform of blue and gold for service. Gaudy banners were also provided and a military band formed, which practiced martial airs, without the slightest endeavor to conceal from Spain's representatives in London what was afoot.

It was not long before the Spanish Minister was making most emphatic protests to the British Foreign Office; but, though he succeeded in getting the blatant nature of the preparations somewhat softened, he failed in preventing the "Hussars" and "Lancers," gaudy uniforms and all, from sailing to their far-away destination.

To the number of some nine hundred, in five vessels, they left England at the end of 1817. One contingent, under Colonel Skeene, was shipwrecked off the English coast, perishing almost to a man. The others managed to reach the West Indies, but all sorts of vicissitudes befell them. Deaths and desertions thinned their numbers to such an extent that, of the whole force, only a small percentage succeeded eventually in sailing up the Orinoco and reaching Angostura, Bolívar's capital.

But these few were most welcome to him. They were

at once assigned to military duty farther up the great stream. After a period of anarchy and insubordination, during which there was much bad blood between natives and foreigners, and attempts were made by some of the latter to overthrow the authority of Bolívar, order was again restored.

A "British brigade" was formed and placed under the orders of Colonel James Rooke, an Irishman who had been serving on Bolívar's staff for some time. Hippisley, Wilson and others among the original force enlisted by López Méndez in London, resigned their commissions in the Venezuelan army and went back to Europe, furious against Bolívar, leveling against him every sort of opprobrious epithet. They declared that they had been deceived, that the promises made them had been broken, that the Supreme Chief of Venezuela and his London representative were mere crooks. In London, Wilson actually caused the arrest of López Méndez, and both he and Hippisley wrote books furiously denouncing Bolívar and his London agent. To their accusations both Venezuelans replied promptly and vigorously, denying every charge of bad faith.

Hippisley, while in Venezuela, saw much of Bolívar, at a critical period in the Liberator's career, and to him we owe an eyewitness's description of what manner of man the Venezuelan commander was during those hazardous days on the Orinoco.

"I had a full opportunity," wrote Hippisley in his book about his adventures, "of surveying the general whilst he was in conversation. . . . From what I had heard of him I was led to expect a very different man than I now saw before me. General Bolívar is a mean-

looking person seemingly (though but 38) * about 50 years in age. He is about 5 feet 6 inches in height; thin, sallow complexion, lengthened visage, marked with every symptom of anxiety and care, I could almost add, despondency. He seemed also to have undergone great fatigue, his dark and, according to report, brilliant eyes, were now dull and heavy, although I could give them credit for possessing more fire and animation when his frame was less harassed. Black hair, loosely tied behind with a piece of riband, large mustachios, black handkerchief round his neck, blue great coat and blue trowsers, boots and spurs completed his costume. In my eyes he might have passed for anything but the thing he really was. Across the chamber was suspended one of the Spanish hammocks on which he occasionally sat, lolled and swang whilst conversing and seldom remained in the same posture for two minutes together."

The Englishman adds:

"The general-in-chief is, in common with the rest of his countrymen, much attached to women, and one, two or three generally accompany him on his various marches."

Here Hippisley was right. From his earliest youth Bolívar distinguished himself in amorous pursuits. In Europe, both before his marriage and afterwards when seeking to forget his despair at the death of his beloved young wife, he was assiduous in pursuit of members of the fair sex. Subsequently, on even his most arduous campaigns—even in the very moment of battle—he was accompanied, as Hippisley has recorded, by

* As a matter of fact Bolívar, at this time, was 34.

some favorite woman or women. In fact, one malicious historian has gone so far as to assert that once Bolívar actually risked capture by the advancing Spaniards and nearly ruined an entire plan of campaign, because he insisted on waiting until his mistress of the moment had joined him. At another period of his career there was much grumbling among his officers owing to the arrogant attitude adopted toward them by another female favorite of their commander—indeed her conduct seemed to them so insulting as to justify sending a "round robin" of protest to Bolívar.

Yet, despite amorous proclivities, Simon Bolívar may almost be said to have been a man of one lifelong love. Were it not for the entry into his life, many years after he had become a widower, of a certain mistress who really seems to have given him something more than sensual enjoyment, it might be said of him that his one and only love was gentle Maria Teresa, the bride of his early youth, who died ere she had been his wife a year, leaving him plunged in a despair that threatened to drive him to suicide.

Often while battling for his country's independence, Bolívar used to recall his delightful honeymoon with Maria Teresa on his great estate at San Mateo.

"I loved my wife very dearly," he would tell comrades, as they sat in the light of the campfires of his army, with those of the foe glowing menacingly a short distance away. "Had she lived, I should have been happy to live an uneventful life by her side. Maybe I should not have been satisfied to become nothing better than mayor of San Mateo, but, nevertheless, had she

been spared to me, I doubt if I should ever have gone out into the world and made myself Simon Bolívar the Liberator."

Maria Teresa died when her young bridegroom was barely twenty years old. He was destined to live for more than a quarter of a century after her death, yet never did he take another wife and almost never does he seem to have looked upon members of the opposite sex except as pretty toys with which to while away idle hours intervening between battles or pressing affairs of state. In the years of his maturity there were women in plenty, but no one woman—that is, until a score of years after he had laid Maria Teresa in her grave, when there remained to him only a few years more of life. Then, once more, a woman appeared on his horizon.

To fill the gaps in the ranks of the original force of foreign veterans who had braved the trip from Europe to Venezuela, many more, equally valiant and adventurous, found their way to Angostura and into the forefront of the battles which Simon Bolívar was waging against the Spaniards. With one of these later contingents came Daniel Florence O'Leary, a young Irishman destined to become a favorite aide-de-camp of the Liberator and the best known of his biographers.

Another foreigner destined to achievement in days to come was a German, Baron Johannes von Uzlar, who had fought with the Hanoverians against Napoleon at Waterloo, and who, by introducing the stern drill tactics of Prussia among Bolívar's raw recruits, won for himself a niche in Venezuelan history comparable to that

of Baron von Steuben in the annals of the North American Revolution.

At first the foreigners were unpopular with the native Venezuelans. The latter looked down, for instance, on the English, as "heretics." Colonel Hippisley got into an angry row with General Montilla, one of Bolívar's lieutenants, who became so incensed against the Britisher that he ordered his arrest. At San Fernando, on the Apure, one of the main tributaries of the Orinoco, some of the foreign legionaries participated in a drunken orgy; there was promiscuous looting and all sorts of disorder—which did not enhance the good repute of the "heretics" and "interlopers."

The gaudy uniforms of the newcomers were soon mere memories—the Orinoco climate made short work of them, nor could the impoverished treasury of the Third Venezuelan Republic replace them when they were reduced to tatters. Colonel Rooke actually went to a banquet with his coat pinned together with thorns in lieu of non-existent buttons, and without collar or shirt.

"Give the colonel one of my shirts!" Bolívar peremptorily ordered his servant. The servant merely shrugged his shoulders.

"How can I, General?" he expostulated. "You have only two shirts. One you are wearing. The other is in the wash!"

Gone were scarlet jackets and gold trimmings, gone the panoply of war which these men from across the sea had known at Waterloo! Only its peril and grimness remained. But the best of the foreigners soon adapted themselves, like true soldiers, to the new conditions.

Leaving whining and drunken rioting to malingerers and weaklings, they sternly set their faces to the arduous tasks before them. And from those first days in Angostura, when they confronted Morillo and his Spaniards, to the time when the last Spanish regiment had been driven from Spanish America and the last Spanish banner lay in the dust, scarcely a battle was waged by Bolívar or his lieutenants in which some Englishman or Scotchman, Irishman or German, who had first tasted war in his native Europe, did not prove his mettle and make his European experience do yeoman service.

Chapter X

THE CENTAUR

OUT of the llanos, the vast plains bordering on the Orinoco and Apure, had come, in the black year 1814, José Tomás Boves, Attila of Venezuela, Nemesis of Simon Bolívar. Now, out of those same llanos was to come another fantastic figure—like Boves a centaur, a scourge to his foes, a dominator of men, but, unlike the Asturian, without the stain of cruelty, and, again unlike Boves, destined to bring to Simon Bolívar succor and strength instead of rout and ruin.

José Antonio Páez! * In the annals of Venezuela this centaur lives enshrined in a glory surpassed only by that of the Liberator himself. And he actually wrests first place from Bolívar when it comes to picturesqueness, to personal audacity, to romantic glamour.

There is about Páez a touch of the supernatural, of the incredible, of the mythological. The most enthusiastic admirers of Bolívar find nothing incongruous in picturing their hero side by side with Napoleon and Julius Cæsar and Frederick the Great, in the august company of the compellers of victory. But not even the most extravagant worshiper of Páez can visualize him in such surroundings. They can, however, imagine him charging beside Agamemnon into the ranks of the Tro-

* Pronounced in South America PAH'-ESS. In Spain it would be PAH'-ETH.

jans; riding beside Hector, brandishing his spear in the faces of the Greeks; seated beside Ulysses, craftily devising stratagems for the discomfiture of adversaries.

Bolívar is real, Páez unreal. Bolívar belongs to history, Páez to legend; their coöperation has the smack of Bonaparte joining hands with Achilles.

José Antonio Páez was born near Acarigua, on the plains of the Apure, in 1790, so he was Bolívar's junior by seven years. From his earliest youth life, for him, was that of a plainsman, a cowboy, of one more at home in the saddle than on foot—a llanero without his horse seems, somehow, crippled.

Unlike so many thousands of his fellow plainsmen, Páez had no sympathy at any time for the royalist cause. While other llaneros were thronging to serve under Spanish officers, against Bolívar and the rest of those vowed to bring independence to their native country, Páez was whole-heartedly on the side of the patriots.

In 1810, when barely twenty years old, he joined those of the latter who were fighting in the province of Barinas. Young as he was, he immediately gave evidence of the prowess which was to make him famous as a fighter and wrap his career in all the thrilling mystery of legend.

The Spanish commander in the region, Tízcar, choosing to forget that Páez had won his spurs as a combatant against Spain, offered the dashing young llanero a captaincy in the Spanish forces. The offer was not at all to Páez's liking, but refusal carried with it the probability of summary vengeance from Tízcar, so the youth decided to get out of reach of the Spaniard as fast as his horse could carry him.

But Tízcar caught him and sentenced him to be shot. On the eve of the execution, the wily Páez effected his escape and, again putting spurs to his horse, succeeded this time in distancing his pursuers.

In 1814, while Bolívar was at grips with Boves, Páez, serving under the Venezuelan patriot Garcia de Sena, began to distinguish himself as a cavalry leader of reckless valor and extraordinary influence over the wild riders of the plains. In fact, under the very eyes of Boves, another Boves was rising, a cleaner and worthier leader, vowed to hostility against Spain, committed to uprooting in South America the authority of the king across the water to whom the other Boves was devoting the full measure of his ability and mercilessness.

Soon the llanos began to ring with the exploits of José Antonio Páez. Attracting to his banners hundreds of horsemen, he established over them an ascendancy and inspired in them a degree of awe and affection second not at all to the feelings inspired by the bloodstained centaur from Asturias. By 1816, two years after Boves had received the lance-thrust which stretched him dead on the red field of Urica, Páez was supreme in the central llanos of Venezuela, monarch over the turbulent riders of the Guárico, of Calabozo, of Barinas and the banks of the Apure.

Against him marched the Spaniard La Torre, schooled in the wars of Europe, a hardy and resourceful soldier. At Mucuritas his trained battalions met the wild men of Páez. The centaur realized that he and his could do nothing in frontal attack; he ordered his horsemen to fall back before the deployed lines of La Torre, to break as if in flight, to gallop away as if struck by panic.

The Spaniards, horse and foot, followed with lusty cheers; the taste of victory was in their mouths. But suddenly Páez, waving his sword, gave the command to his men to turn about. They obeyed with alacrity, whirled around, galloped back, and, catching the soldiers of La Torre scattered and careless in their supposed triumph, they cut them down by wholesale, drove them back with ease, swept them away in ignominious defeat.

La Torre's men, however, were tried warriors. Pulling themselves together, they formed a new line of battle. Knees to the ground, they awaited the charge of Páez's centaurs, confident that, against an iron defense, the attack of the wild horsemen must be broken to pieces. But suddenly the eyes of the Spaniards stuck out in amazement, rifles dropped from their inert fingers, they began to mutter and tremble. For, all along the horizon there was a wall of smoke, lighted up by jagged spurts of flame, and it was rolling steadily and menacingly toward their lines. Páez, taking advantage of the direction of the wind, which was away from his squadrons and toward the forces of La Torre, had ordered his men to set fire to the grass covering the llano on which they were fighting. Now, shrouded in smoke, dotted with sparks, the fire was sweeping toward the Spaniards.

They wavered and broke, they ran in panic—it looked as if it was all up with La Torre and his men. And it would have been indubitably, had not some of the Spanish officers descried, not far ahead, a stretch of swamp and, with peremptory gesticulations and hoarse shouts of command, urged the frightened soldiers to make for it as fast as their legs could carry them. There, huddled ignominiously in muddy water and watery mud, the

Spaniards waited, while smoke and flame swept past them. Had it not been for that swamp, La Torre and his men would have been burned to death or speared by the llaneros, following, with hideous yells, behind the curtain of fire.

In the days of his sensational exploits on his native plains Páez was a youth of medium height, of massive build in the upper part of his body, but tapering down in the lower part, like most llaneros accustomed to spending as much time on horses as off them. He had a pair of broad shoulders and a deep chest, a short, thick-set neck, and a large head, over which waved a crop of dark chestnut hair. His skin would have been very fair had not exposure to the sun tanned it a light brown; his eyes, dark and vivacious, surmounted a straight nose, the nostrils of which were strikingly broad. He wore a full beard, and his habitual expression, especially when confronted by strangers, was one of profound caution and distrust.

A son of poor and illiterate parents, with no education whatever, Páez was in the habit of keeping silent before those better educated than himself; among his own cronies, though, he was most loquacious; in his rough camps on the llanos, with the horses of his men tethered around him and the campfires flaring into the sky, he loved to crack rough jokes, to boast, with a wealth of picturesque gesticulation, of his feats as a cowboy or in fighting the Spaniards.

Though possessed of admirable qualifications for leading guerrillas, Páez had no military attainments, in the usually accepted sense. He was unacquainted, even, with the words designating the most elementary items

in military tactics or drill. Even had he been able to offset his original ignorance by knowledge acquired later, he would never have been fitted for carrying out really complicated military operations, for the slightest contradiction from any one of his subordinates was likely to throw him into violent epileptic convulsions, which cause him to fall unconscious, foam at the mouth, and remain prostrated sometimes for entire days at a time. Occasionally these convulsions overtook him in the heat of battle—unexpected resistance, for example, on the part of his adversaries more than once caused them.

O'Leary, Bolívar's aide and biographer, who served under him and knew him well, says of Páez: "Rash, active, brave, fertile in ruses, quick in imagination, resolute in execution, rapid in his movements, the weaker the force he commanded, the more terrible he was."

Entrusted with over a thousand men, his gifts were apt to forsake him and failure ruin his efforts; this was especially true if the bulk of such a force was composed of infantry, concerning the handling of which Páez, a rider of the plains first, last and all the time, knew next to nothing. With all the qualities which have given him preëminent celebrity in the history of his country, he had no method shaping his actions, no moral courage and, in so far as political ability was concerned, he was a nonentity. Moreover, in friendship he was inconstant—witness his dealings with Simon Bolívar which eventually practically drove the Liberator to death in exile. Páez was overweeningly ambitious and, though scarcely deserving the epithet of cruel, he was careless of human life and guilty on more than one occasion of sacrificing it needlessly. As a horseman, he was supreme in skill,

as an inspirer of obedience and awe among the rude llaneros he ranked with that bloodthirsty tamer of men, Boves. His was a nature sure to make him the slave of flatterers, the tool of brainier men.

He died in New York City (of all places!) in 1873, at the ripe old age of eighty-three, having been President of Venezuela for several terms and having been forced, eventually, like Bolívar, into exile. The United States government sent his remains on a war vessel to Venezuela escorted by a guard of honor, which marched in the procession conveying the body of the veteran old llanero to its tomb in the Venezuelan Pantheon.

Like a true plainsman, Páez loved horses. To him they were human, indispensable, limbs of his limbs, throbbing parts of his being. Into many a hot fight he rode on a favorite horse, a splendid steed of the Venezuelan llanos, toward which he felt a degree of affection few humans ever wrung from him. One day, in a lively skirmish against the Spaniards, a bullet stretched Páez's horse dead beneath him.

He was beside himself, he wept like a woman, he raved, he tore his hair, he frothed at the mouth in pain and fury. Then, bestriding another horse and waving above his head his terrible lance, he galloped along the front of his llaneros.

"Men!" he shouted, dashing away tears, spitting white foam from his lips, "over there are the Spaniards! They have just killed my horse! I am going to avenge him! Whether you follow me or not, I am going to ride them down, and spear them and kill them! They killed my horse! Men, are you with me? Will you follow me? Will you avenge the death of that horse of mine?" One

and all, the savage riders, brandishing above their heads their lances, shouted. "Yes, chief! We will avenge your horse!"

"Then—charge!" yelled Páez. Mad as himself, howling like madmen, the llaneros swept down on the astonished enemy. Many a Spaniard that day was trampled or speared to death; many another, maimed and torn and stabbed, cursed the fate which had made him face that maniacal attack.

Bolívar, established at his temporary capital of Angostura, walled from the Spaniards by the majestic sweep of the Orinoco, looking eagerly in every direction for possible helpers, soon realized that in José Antonio Páez, fighting on the llanos many miles away, he might have an extraordinarily valuable lieutenant. Reports of the centaur's heroic exploits, which lost nothing in the telling and retelling, had been reaching Bolívar for some time; everybody who came down the Apure and Orinoco and landed at Angostura went about spouting yarns concerning Páez which thrilled the embattled patriots of Angostura.

"Here is the man for me!" thought Simon Bolívar. So he dispatched two trusted emissaries to seek out Páez and enlist his aid in a coördinated campaign to drive Morillo and his Spaniards from Venezuelan soil and then pass on to far more ambitious things—to the liberation, indeed, of all Spanish America.

Bolívar's emissaries found Páez, bestriding a charger, surrounded by his fierce cavalrymen, encamped in the heart of the treeless, limitless llanos which were his home and fortress. Just as Bolívar knew about Páez, so, too, did the centaur know of Bolívar. In fact, what he

had heard about the indomitable Caraqueño had so profoundly impressed this unbridled son of the llanos, averse to all forms of control, that he agreed without ado to acknowledge Bolívar as supreme head of the Venezuelan Republic and general-in-chief of its armies, and to place himself and his squadrons under the other's orders.

After that, Bolívar himself ascended the Orinoco, met Páez, embraced him, congratulated him on his feats in the cause of freedom. Páez proudly marshaled his squadrons of fierce, half-naked riders, astride their champing little horses, for Bolívar to review them. As he rode along their lines, they raised their lances in salute, and thunderously acclaimed the chief of their chief.

It was the first time that Bolívar had seen the llaneros under Páez, the men destined to help him to victory in many a fight. Though he was a patrician, nurtured in luxury and fond of the good things of life, none surpassed him in adapting himself to the hardships of campaigning, in getting along with all kinds of men. So now, too, he soon made friends with Páez's wild llaneros, won their confidence, went among them in moments of relaxation—he whose eyes could flash and whose voice could thunder in furious command—as if there were no military or social gulf between them. He partook of their food, joked with them as if they were his brothers. Soon he knew all the celebrities among them, whose exploits or traits had lifted them above the ruck—including, of course, "El Negro Primero."

"El Negro Primero" may be translated, freely, "Negro Number One." He was a gigantic black, an ex-

slave, whose great stature, enormous strength and superhuman prowess with the lance had made him one of the most trusted of all the daredevils in the ranks of Páez's horsemen. Besides, his childlike nature and naïve wit had made him a great favorite with his comrades.

Before joining Páez, this swarthy giant had served with the Spaniards against the patriots. Now, with General Bolívar, commander-in-chief of the patriots, in the same camp with him, the big negro was scared lest he get into trouble on account of his past record. So he went from soldier to soldier, adjuring each in the solemnest terms, not to tell Bolívar that he had fought under the flag of Spain. Scenting a good joke, they promptly told the Liberator. He had the negro haled before him.

"What made you serve under the Spaniards?" he asked in a voice of mock severity. Around him stood a ring of grinning plainsmen.

The giant looked at his baiters as if he would like to spear them then and there. Then, in great embarrassment, he turned to Bolívar.

"I tell you what made me do it, boss. It was greed."

"What do you mean?"

"Yes, greed did it. You see, down in the llanos where I lived I noticed that every man who went to the war came back with a shirt. Now I hadn't no shirt. So I said to two negroes, friends of mine: 'Look here, suppose I go to the war and get myself a shirt and get you two fellers a shirt apiece.' 'Fine!' they says. So I joined up with the Spaniards and went to the war.

"Well, we fought a big battle and we won it and I see a white man, lying dead in front of me, with such an

elegant coat and shirt! So I gets off my horse and begins to strip him. But just then a Spanish officer gallops up and he says:

" 'Hey there, what you doing, nigger?'

" 'Why, ain't the war all over?' says I.

" 'Over?—hell!' he roars. 'Get on your horse, you loafer, and get busy fighting. Look over there!'

"I looks and sure enough there was the enemy gallopin' down at us. I thought they was all dead, boss. I thought the war was over, boss. But it wasn't! Oh, no! And the Spaniards got licked, and I ran away! And I ran and ran and ran until I found General Páez. And now I's with him! Honest, I wasn't with the Spaniards long, boss!"

Bolívar shouts with laughter. The big negro shifts uneasily from foot to foot. Again his chief, scowling as if in high dudgeon, turns to him and says:

"I have been told that, before you joined General Páez, you stole other people's cattle. Is this true?"

"Of course it is, boss. I had to eat, didn't I?"

Another laugh. Gradually it dawns on Negro Number One that he is not to be punished, that "Boss" Bolívar and all the rest of them are his friends. He grins from ear to ear.

Often, in camp and on the march, Bolívar would say to one of his aides:

"Go and fetch me El Negro Primero. I want to have a good laugh!" Nor was it only the fact that he could arouse laughter that endeared the big black to the Liberator. Never was there a fight in which the llaneros took part that the ex-slave did not distinguish himself.

In a hut beside the rolling flood of the great Orinoco, Bolívar and Páez—the one a thing high-strung, scion of nobility, the other a rough plebeian, brawny and unkempt—held a council of war and devised a plan of operations against Morillo.

It involved the aid of Zaraza, a brave but reckless guerrilla leader who at that time was harassing the Spanish forces north of the Orinoco. Overconfident at meeting an inferior force under the veteran Spaniard, La Torre, Zaraza launched his men in a headlong attack at La Hogaza and got himself a bad beating. This effectually upset the plan concerted by Bolívar and Páez. The march against the Spaniards had to be put off.

Not for long, though. Bolívar, energetic as ever, was keen to pit himself, in combination with his new ally from the llanos, against the foe. Ascending the Orinoco along the right bank, on the opposite side of the river from where the Spaniards were, he effected a junction with Páez. Together, they passed in review a force of several thousand men. It included Venezuelans from Angostura and the eastern provinces, members of the Foreign Legion enlisted by López Méndez in London, ragged but formidable squadrons of llaneros. Motley they were, ill-clad and insufficiently equipped, but they brimmed with valor and thirsted for action. It was with a satisfied smile on his face that Bolívar reviewed them.

But how get at Morillo? The patriots were on the right bank of the broad Apure, the Spaniards, based on Calabozo, were across the river, their main body many miles from its left bank. Not a vessel of any sort was available for crossing the stream—what was to be done? Frowning and fretful, Bolívar rode along the bank with

Páez assembling his "llanero" horsemen for the attack on the Spanish gunboats in the Apure River. (From a painting by Tito Salas, at Carácas, Venezuela)

Páez; angrily he eyed a flotilla of Spanish gunboats and "flecheras"—big river craft—anchored in midstream, with guns trained on the bank held by their enemies.

"We cannot get across," said Bolívar to Páez. "We cannot get any boats."

"Yes, we can," said Páez calmly.

"Where?"

"There!" He pointed to the Spanish flotilla. Bolívar threw him a puzzled glance.

"What do you mean?"

"We can get our men across the river in those Spanish boats?"

"How?"

"By capturing them."

"Who will capture them?"

"I will!"

Bolívar's frown grew darker. Was this wild centaur making fun of him? Before he could say more, Páez had shouted to Aramendi, his most trusted subordinate, and to some fifty other horsemen who had been riding behind him and Bolívar.

"See those boats!" he cried, as the llaneros clustered around, reining in their prancing horses. "We must capture them for General Bolívar! He needs them! Follow me, my children!"

Digging his spurs into his horse, Páez made it leap from the bank squarely into the deep waters of the Apure. With a yell of savage delight, Aramendi and his men leaped after him—riding bareback, reins clutched in one hand, spears held aloft in the other. Urging on their snorting steeds, now up to their necks

in the river, pressing knees to their sides, kicking up clouds of foam, they bore down, howling like Oriental dervishes, on the Spanish flotilla.

The Spaniards, flocking in stupefaction to the bulwarks, met the weird attack with a shower of bullets, countered with sword and bayonet the wicked spears of their assailants as they climbed, dripping wet, over the sides of the vessels. But the onslaught was too furious, too sudden, too incredible, the amazement aboard the flotilla too weakening for any effective resistance. Páez and Aramendi and the rest of the plainsmen speared Spaniards until the last man of the enemy was dead, disabled or over the side, swimming desperately for shore.

Then they jumped into the water again, again bestrode their horses, and, amid cheers and snorts and spurts of foam, made for the right bank. Eyes shining with triumph, clothes soaked to the skin, Páez scrambled up the bank, spurred his horse to where Bolívar, speechless from amazement, had witnessed the unbelievable battle in mid-stream.

"General!" cried Páez, while the water poured from his garments, "there are the boats you need! We can now cross the Apure!" Still struck dumb, Bolívar held out his hand to this hero of ancient mythology, pitchforked, by a freak of fate, into modern history.

That night he and Páez and thousands more were on the left bank, and the march against Morillo, all unsuspecting at Calabozo, was in full swing.

A few days later Bolívar appeared before Calabozo to the great astonishment of Morillo, who imagined him to be still on the right bank of the Apure, with no means

of ferrying his army across. The Spanish commander, deeming prudence in this case the better part of valor, evacuated the town and fell back to El Sombrero, between Calabozo and the valleys of Aragua—where Bolívar had known victory and defeat in earlier years of the struggle against Spain.

Bolívar was all for following Morillo and crushing him once for all, but now arose a dispute between him and Páez, the first of many which, unfortunately, were to mar the relations between the Liberator and the centaur and eventually involve them in bitter enmity. The llanos, objected Páez, were the place for his llaneros; should they be forced to fight in the hilly country to the north, their value as horsemen would be gone. Besides, Páez had set his heart on capturing San Fernando, on the Apure, the principal town of the region which was his home. To advance against Morillo would mean leaving San Fernando and the Spaniards garrisoning it far behind them.

In vain Bolívar argued. He knew that, with Morillo crushed, the reduction of San Fernando would be inevitable; that, even with the Spaniards still offering opposition to the patriots, the little garrison at San Fernando was too small to justify worry. But it behooved him to tread warily. In Páez he had an ally who must be humored and conciliated; accustomed to the untrammeled life of the plains, to imposing his will upon wild men with a love of freedom as great as his own, the centaur was by no means inclined, at this early stage of playing second fiddle to Simon Bolívar, to have the unpalatable job further soured for him by arbitrariness on the part of the commander-in-chief.

There was work here for Bolívar the Fox, not for Bolívar the Lion.

Bowing, then, to necessity, he gave the order to turn back. Venezuelans and their foreign helpers moved against San Fernando. Morillo, waiting, apprehensively, in the hills around El Sombrero, secured time to recover from his surprise at Bolívar's unexpected appearance before Calabozo.

Bolívar and Páez made short work of the Spaniards at San Fernando, who were compelled to surrender a few days after the town had been invested by its assailants. Having thus humored Páez, the Liberator again turned northward and, with his entire force, marched on Cura, one of the principal towns of Aragua, between Carácas and Valencia—in the heart of the region where he and Ribas and other valiant champions of independence had coped, with varying fortunes, against bloody Boves, ruthless Morales and the rest of the paladins of King Ferdinand VII of Spain.

Bolívar had conceived the masterly idea of turning first against Morales, who was in eastern Aragua, crushing him before Morillo, his chief, could come up to his aid from Valencia, and then, countermarching with his usual rapidity, to fall upon the Spanish commander-in-chief, crush him and thus, with two blows, practically free Venezuela again from Spanish domination. After two such victories, he reasoned, there would be nothing but a "mopping-up" process to be carried out against a few Spanish contingents scattered over the rest of Venezuela's vast territory.

But a pivotal part in the strategy was entrusted to Zaraza, the guerrilla leader whose ill-timed impetuosity

had lost La Hogaza and thwarted Bolívar's previous plan. Again Zaraza, not by impetuosity this time, but by sheer carelessness, ruined the new campaign. Installed at the defile of La Cabrera, between Carácas and Valencia—where the Marquis del Toro had been routed by Monteverde in the days of Miranda's Venezuelan Republic—Zaraza was instructed to prevent Morillo from moving westward and joining Morales, while Bolívar was engaged in smashing the army of the latter. Zaraza, however, allowed himself to be surprised by Morillo, who, after cutting to pieces the defenders of La Cabrera, poured his men through the narrow defile and hastened to the aid of Morales.

Fortunately for Bolívar, a dispatch-bearer, galloping at full speed eastward, reached his headquarters with the news that Morillo was almost upon him. Abandoning his plan of crushing Morales, Bolívar gave the order to his men to fall back. He did it in the nick of time —a few hours later Morillo joined Morales. Had not Bolívar retreated he would have been caught between the two Spanish armies. Morillo spat out Spanish curses in a paroxysm of anger. He had had visions of routing, possibly of capturing or killing, the man who was the life and soul of Venezuelan resistance to Spain.

Fickle fortune, however, having administered this slap to Bolívar's foe, suddenly turned from the Venezuelan to the Spaniard. Bolívar, falling back before the combined forces of Morillo and Morales, had reached the fatal field of La Puerta—that field which had twice proved of ill omen to the Venezuelan cause, once to an army led by Bolívar himself—when Morales, whose military capacity was as great as his cruelty, succeeded

in coming up with the Venezuelan rear guard. He harassed it so sorely that Bolívar was obliged to turn and give battle.

At first the fight went well for the patriots. Though the men of Morales fought spiritedly, they were outnumbered. Soon Bolívar was pressing them so hard that his victory seemed imminent.

But, at this moment, Morillo, with the bulk of the Spanish forces, put in an appearance and, launching a furious attack, drove back the Venezuelan forces, saved Morales and, pressing home his advantage, made the field of La Puerta for the third time a place of death and ruin for the cause of South American independence. Despite desperate attempts by their chiefs to check the rout, the troops of Bolívar and Páez were almost totally destroyed, half of them were killed, wounded or captured. The remnants, abandoning arms and equipment, fled toward Calabozo. Even Bolívar's private correspondence fell into the hands of Morillo.

In the camp of the Spaniards there was immense exultation. In far-away Spain, the news of Morillo's victory at the third battle of La Puerta was considered to mean the end of the Third Venezuelan Republic, just as the second La Puerta had meant the end of that republic's predecessor. As a reward for the victory, the grateful Ferdinand VII made Morillo Marquis of La Puerta—his descendants bear the title to this day.

Again the cause of freedom seemed doomed. Like Boves after the second La Puerta, Morillo now seemed to have the game in his hands. The army of the patriots had been cut to pieces. As in 1814, after Boves had routed him on the same ill-omened field, which had

now again brought his hopes near to annihilation, Bolívar was in full flight, accompanied only by squads of shaken and discouraged soldiers, faced by strong and exultant foes, who felt confident that it was but a question of a few weeks before the *coup de grâce* was to be administered to the impudent defiers of King Ferdinand's rule in Venezuela.

Where were Bolívar's dreams of a free Venezuela? —of a great republic composed of Venezuela and her neighbor, New Granada—of a still greater nation comprising his native Venezuela, New Granada, the Spanish domain of Quito,—nay, including lands even further to the south, confederated with still other regions freed from Spain, until the vast area wrested from Ferdinand VII and endowed with independence should stretch, unbroken, from the borders of the United States to the southernmost tip of Patagonia? Ay, what of these dreams? He who had dreamed them was apparently headed again for exile—this time, probably, to lasting exile and lasting oblivion. Doom seemed to be closing in on him; surely there was no recovery from such a shattering blow as the third La Puerta.

There doubtless would have been no recovery for a man not Simon Bolívar.

On him, however, defeat acted as a spur. It stung him to fury, released hidden energies, brought a spirit of desperation, aroused within him courage immense and unquenchable, elicited flashes of inspiration, thoughts imbued with genius. Routed, running away with the foe close behind, his mind was already seething with new plans. He would collect new forces, he would resist, he would check Morillo, beat him.

After all, things were not so bad as in 1814, when he was fleeing from Boves! He had as a base the broad Orinoco; he had a capital city, little Angostura, with a regular Venezuelan Congress and Venezuelan government; he had Páez and his llaneros, his own Venezuelan veterans, the brave foreigners under that indomitable Irishman, Rooke.

Before he reached Calabozo, Bolívar narrowly escaped seeing the end alike of his dreams and of his life. A Spanish officer, Renovales by name, volunteered to try to assassinate the rebel leader. Riding far ahead of the Spanish main body, Renovales reached Bolívar's camp at Rincón de Los Toros and, accompanied by a few equally daring followers, crept past the pickets to where the Venezuelan commander was sleeping in a hammock slung between two trees. As they crept still closer, Renovales and his companions encountered Santander, Bolívar's New Granadan comrade, but they gave the countersign—obtained through some trick—and Santander, all unsuspecting, let them pass. Just before they reached Bolívar's hammock, however, he somehow scented danger and leaped to his feet. Immediately Renovales and the other Spaniards fired their pistols almost point-blank at their intended victim; the bullets whistled over his head, but none hit him.

Then came a scene of wild confusion, promiscuous shooting, shouts and scurrying of feet, as more and more of Bolívar's followers, rudely awakened, tried to find out what was happening. The Liberator himself, almost naked, found his way in the darkness to a horse and started to bestride it, but the animal, frightened

by the shots and shouts roundabout, kicked violently at the man seeking to mount, hurt him painfully, and then galloped away, riderless. Maimed and bewildered, Bolívar continued to stumble forward, convinced that his camp had been surprised by a large Spanish force. Meanwhile Renovales and his companions were still firing, the danger was still great.

Finally Bolívar came upon a faithful soldier, who, dismounting, offered his horse to his chief. Leaping to the saddle he galloped away in the darkness—coatless, hatless, alone.

He and the rest of his beaten comrades eventually made their way to San Fernando, on the Apure, where Bolívar lay ill of a fever for weeks. Páez, sent northward with a hastily-gathered force to check Morillo, was beaten by that doughty Spaniard and driven headlong into his native llanos. To make the situation even blacker, news reached Bolívar as he tossed in fever in his hammock at San Fernando, that Mariño and Bermúdez, leaders of the patriots in eastern Venezuela, had suffered defeats at the hands of the Spanish officers sent against them by Morillo. And—as a climax to his misfortunes—Páez, always restive under control, showed signs of obeying the orders of Bolívar no longer, of arrogating to himself the supreme authority in the tottering Venezuelan Republic.

Things were again at their blackest—1814 over again. Hopes in the dust. Surely nothing left but flight—or surrender—or death.

Surely not—that is, for men not named Simon Bolívar.

For despair, he substitutes a rebirth of hope. To the thought of surrender he opposes new schemes for raising men, executing marches, offering battle. In lieu of preparing for death, to be met on some field of defeat in a useless spirit of theatricalism and bravado, he gives rein, in his mind, to the most magnificent inspiration of his whole life—to an idea which, alone, would entitle him to a place among the world's great military geniuses.

Chapter XI

STATESMAN AND SOLDIER

THOUGH, to the mind of Simon Bolívar, the soldier, this splendid military inspiration had come, it behooved him for the present to yield precedence to Simon Bolívar, the statesman. Unless he strengthened the foundations of that Republic of Venezuela from which he must draw the authority and resources for all his military ventures, the latest—and most brilliant—of his inspirations could never be translated into reality. So he kept his idea to himself, refused to be tempted into a rashness which might be fatal. Repairing to Angostura, he applied himself, with the devouring energy that was his main characteristic, to laying the foundations of a government capable of ranking Venezuela among the free nations of the world, of placing her existence beyond the hazards of the battlefield, of the caprices of the god of war.

Up to now Bolívar's ventures into statesmanship were hardly to be taken seriously. He had been a star member of a debating society at Carácas in the days before the First Venezuelan Republic, when Miranda, and not he, was the principal rebel against Spain in Venezuela. Later, also, when Venezuela's first Congress evolved its first Constitution, Bolívar was not even a member of that Congress—the ideas which it sponsored, based on

a federated Venezuela, were of a sort which, throughout his life, aroused in him only disfavor and disbelief.

In the manifesto issued by him at Cartagena, much of the man's political faith was embodied, but the circumstances under which it saw the light—when he was proscribed and powerless, begging for employment in an alien land—were hardly such as to make what he said worthy of anybody's attention. Somewhat the same was true of the brief days during which he headed the Second Venezuelan Republic of 1814. He issued proclamations, he sketched a form of government, he reiterated his advocacy of a strongly centralized as against a federated Venezuela, he instituted comparisons between conditions in South and North America. But all his theories, all his hopes and ambitions, were crushed into the dust when the ruthless Boves routed him at La Puerta and sent him headlong into exile in the West Indies.

Then there was the letter to Mr. Hyslop of Jamaica, full of political wisdom, indeed, but again the work of an exile, penniless and seemingly remote from any prospect of making his dreams into realities.

Now, however, things were far different. He was installed at Angostura, successfully defying the might of Spain. At his imperious summons the Third Venezuelan Republic had come into being. He was at its head, clothed with dictatorial powers, military and civil; indeed it is no exaggeration to say that Simon Bolívar and the Third Republic were one and the same. Those who had dared oppose him had been swept from his path or bent to his dominant will. Piar, shot as a traitor,

lay in his grave. The turbulent Mariño, cowed into submission, was playing second fiddle in eastern Venezuela. Lesser satellites, overawed at what had happened to Piar and Mariño, had stifled their ambitions of supremacy and acknowledged Bolívar's domination.

The time had come, he realized, to convoke another Congress, to give to the Venezuelan government a form which might cause other nations to respect it. But now there was to be no dallying with impracticable theories. With the reins of power in his hands, Simon Bolívar had firmly decided to mold the government of the Third Republic into a form calculated to help, not hinder, the struggle against Spain. His ideal of government was still pure democracy; but, now as always, he felt convinced that pure democracy could not be introduced into backward, chaotic Venezuela, where the population, treated by the Spaniards for generations as little better than slaves, were pathetically remote from political enlightenment. Away with beautiful, impossible theories. Let dreams give way to facts—let us remember that we are creating Venezuela, not Utopia!

At Angostura as at Carácas and Cartagena and Jamaica, Simon Bolívar's speeches remained flowery, his letters exuberantly rhetorical, his whole style impregnated with something dangerously close to bombast—otherwise he would not have been Simon Bolívar. But, behind all the exuberance and rhetoric and bombast, there was the grasp of reality, the power to differentiate the possible from the impossible, the unerring instinct for working with the instruments at hand toward the goal yet to be achieved, the driving force of genius. Simon Bolívar, buffeted and beaten for years, was scrambling

to the top, fighting his way out of oblivion, qualifying himself, alike as general and statesman, for a niche in history.

At his behest a council was summoned which was entrusted with finding the ways and means for convoking a new Congress. A commission named by this council drafted a set of rules for an election, which, on October 24, 1818, was approved by Bolívar—who, all along, had stood behind the scenes, pulling strings, letting his eye rove over every move made by his colleagues. It was declared that the First Venezuelan Congress, dissolved when Miranda capitulated to Monteverde in 1812, no longer existed, and that, therefore, new elections must be held. The new Congress, it was decided, should be composed of thirty deputies, five each from the Venezuelan provinces of Margarita, Guayana (in which Angostura was situated), Carácas, Barcelona, Cumaná and Barinas, the only parts of the country which were, entirely or partially, making successful resistance against Spain. It was furthermore resolved that the provinces of Trujillo and Mérida (occupied, at the time, by the Spaniards) were to elect a like number of deputies, as soon as they should be in a position to do so, and that the province of Casanare, though part of New Granada, should have a similar privilege. This last provision reflects the grandiose idea of Bolivar, already taking shape, of uniting Venezuela and New Granada—and eventually other parts of South America still under the Spanish yoke—into one vast republic.

The elections were such in little more than name, for the only parts of Venezuela entirely in the hands of

the patriots were Margarita and Guayana. The deputies supposedly representing the other provinces were in reality mere appointees of the rebel commanders defying Spain within the boundaries of those provinces. Faithful to his belief that federation would merely spell ruin for the republic he was seeking to consolidate, Bolívar impressed upon the deputies the fact that each of them represented not the province from which he happened to be sent, but the whole country. He caused the assembly called together in the little town hugging the shore of the mighty Orinoco to feel itself representative not alone of Venezuela but of the cause for which other Latin-American patriots were fighting all the way from Mexico to the Argentine. The vision of a great and independent Spanish America, stretching from the Rio Grande to Cape Horn, which continually danced before the mind of Simon Bolívar, was made visible now and then by his eloquence to some of his coworkers; not for nothing did that passionate dreamer constantly talk about it and seek to make it real to less imaginative men around him.

Though Bolívar was convinced that, without him, the cause of independence would be lost, he by no means desired to be considered a man lusting for despotic power. "Elect as your magistrates the most virtuous among your fellow citizens," he told the Venezuelans. "Forget if you can, in your elections, those who have liberated you. As for myself, I renounce forever the authority you have conferred upon me and shall accept none except purely military authority, for as long as this unhallowed war lasts in Venezuela. The first day of peace will be the last day of my tenure of office."

Almost the first act of the new Assembly, however, was to name him President of the Venezuelan Republic, a post which—despite what he had said about wanting only military power—he forthwith accepted. For this inconsistency Bolívar has been severely criticized; but what would have been the consequences to the struggling Republic, one may well ask, had he refused to lead it? Up to now it had existed solely, as one chronicler put it, "in his mind and at the point of his sword." Among all his coadjutors not one had shown qualities like his. Having offered to step aside and having had his offer refused and his authority, civil as well as military, sanctioned by the assembly, he had placed himself in a stronger position than ever. If consistency bade him relinquish power, patriotism bade him retain it. Surely he may be pardoned a little political play to the gallery for the sake of the dazzling visions in his mind, visions which not only came to him alone but which he alone was capable of turning into facts.

Having got his Congress together, he proceeded to submit to it his idea of what the government of Venezuela should be. As he saw it, this government should be republican in form, divided into executive, legislative and judicial branches, but with a fourth branch, a "moral arm." This last feature gives to the project a character all its own, a genuine Bolivarian imprint. Throughout Bolívar shows partiality to the British form of government, disfavor toward that of the United States. In his message to the Congress of Angostura, he wrote:

"Examine as one will the nature of the Executive Power in England, one can find therein nothing to impair

the belief that it is the most perfect model for a monarchy or an aristocracy. Let this form of Executive Power be applied to Venezuela in the person of a president (for life) named by the people or by its representatives, and we shall have taken a long step toward national happiness."

He boldly advocated for Venezuela a hereditary Senate—his eye, when he conceived such a body, was on the British House of Lords. "Like the Americans, we have divided national representation into two Chambers," he wrote, "a House of Representatives and a Senate. . . . If the Senate, instead of being elective, should be hereditary, it would be, as I see it, the basis, the binding tie, the soul, of our Republic. Such a body, in political tempests, would ward off lightning from the government and form a barrier against popular waves. Siding with the government, because of justified self-interest in its own preservation, it would always oppose encroachments by the people on the jurisdiction and authority of its magistrates.

"Let us face this truth: most men are unaware of their real interests, they constantly seek to undermine them by attacking those in whose hands the safeguarding of these interests has been deposited. The individual fights against the mass of the people, the mass against authority. Therefore, it is necessary that, in every government, there be a neutral body which shall always side with the attacked party and disarm the attacker. Such a body, to be neutral, must not owe its origin to election by the government or the people—it must enjoy full independence and neither fear nor hope anything from these two founts of authority. A hereditary Senate, being part of the people, shares its interests, sentiments and spirit, for which reason there is no need to fear that it will become alienated from popular interests and forget its legisla-

tive duties. The senators of Rome and the House of Lords in London have been the strongest pillars of the edifice of political and social liberty."

Coming to his idea of a judiciary for Venezuela Bolívar took a fling at the Spanish system. "In asking the creation of permanent judgeships, a jury system and a new code," he told his fellow countrymen, "I have asked Congress to guarantee civil liberty, the most precious, the most just, the most necessary, and, in a word, the sole form of liberty, since without it all other forms are worthless. I have asked for the correction of the most lamentable abuses from which our judicial system suffers, owing to the vicious origin of that sea of Spanish legislation, which, like time itself, collects from all ages and all men the works of insanity as well as those of talent, sensible ideas as well as extravagant, monuments of genius as well as those of mere whim. This encyclopedic system, a monster with ten thousand heads, until now the scourge of Spanish peoples, is the most refined form of torture with which the anger of heaven has cursed the unfortunate Spanish Empire."

And now Bolívar came to the "moral power" with which he wished to endow the government of the new republic—a strange mixture of Utopia and reality, vague idealism and practical common sense.

"Popular education should be the first care of Congress's paternal love," he told the Congress of Angostura. "Morals and education are the two poles of a republic; morals and education are our first needs. Let us take from Athens its Areopagus and the guardians of customs and laws; let us take from Rome its censors and domestic tribunals and, making a holy alliance of these moral

institutions, let us renew in the world the idea of a nation not content with being free and strong but imbued also with the desire of being virtuous. Let us take from Sparta her austere institutions and, forming, from these three springs, a fount of virtue, let us give our republic a Fourth Power, whose province shall be the children, the hearts of men, public spirit, good habits, republican morality. Let us create such an Areopagus that it may watch over the education of our children, of our nation; purify whatever becomes corrupt in the republic; denounce ingratitude, egotism, the cooling of love of country, idleness, civic negligence; pass judgment on the beginnings of corruption, on pernicious examples; punish evil customs with moral punishments, just as laws punish crimes, visiting such punishments not only on that which strikes against the good but on that which brings it into contempt, not only on that which attacks it but on that which weakens it, not only on that which violates the constitution but on that which violates public respect. The jurisdiction of this genuinely holy tribunal should be effective as regards education and instruction, but confined to mere opinion as regards penalties and punishments. Such an institution, no matter how chimerical it may seem, is infinitely more capable of being transformed into reality than others created by some ancient and modern legislators which have been less useful to the human race."

Again Bolívar takes a fling at the federal system as evolved in the United States. "Better for us to adopt the Koran than that form of government, even though it be the best in the world!" he exclaims. That the United States existed and prospered under federalism was a constant source of wonder to Simon Bolívar. "Though the North Americans are a singular blend of political

virtues and moral attainments," he told his colleagues at Angostura, "though cradled in liberty, bred in liberty and fed on pure liberty, it is marvelous that such a weak and complicated system as the federal should have been capable of governing them under such difficult and delicate conditions as those through which they have passed. Despite all which that form of government may have achieved with the American nation, I must say that I have never even remotely considered assimilating the situation and nature of two States as different as the English-American and Spanish-American. Would it not be very difficult to apply to Spain the English code of political, civil and religious liberty? Well, even more difficult would it be to apply to Venezuela the laws of North America!"

The Congress of the Third Venezuelan Republic examined Bolívar's project of government and refused to accept it without important emendations. After considerable debate it was finally adopted in an emasculated form.

Three of his pet ideas—the hereditary Senate, the President named for life, and the nebulous "moral power" which he wished to have exist side by side with the executive, legislative and judicial power—were rejected by the members of the Congress. They were particularly hard on the "moral power"; to them it savored too much of the Inquisition.

Instead of a President for life, the Congress of Angostura decided upon one to hold his post for a term of four years, with the privilege of one reëlection. As for the Senate, its members were to sit for life. Bolívar's idea of a hereditary Senate, with men especially educated to

take the place of his original Senators when these died, and to keep those places until they, in turn, were no more and other men especially prepared to be Senators succeeded them, was relegated by the members of the Congress he had brought into being to the limbo of Utopian dreams.

There! Done! Venezuela has a Constitution, a Congress, a Government. Not exactly of the sort desired by Simon Bolívar, but—has he not said that he does not wish to be a despot? Let others, inferior though they are to himself, blind to what he deems the best interests of their country, have their say, try their theories, parade their knowledge!

Simon Bolívar the Statesman has fulfilled his duty. It is time for him to recede into the wings, to give up his place before the footlights to Simon Bolívar the Soldier.

It is time for the latter to put into execution the most audacious of his military inspirations. Let statesmanship wait! If this latest of his dreams comes true, it will be easy to bend Congresses to his will, force blind Congressmen to see visions akin to his, flood all South America with the same light that illumines his own mind so brightly.

Forward into battle!

Shaking the dust of Angostura and statesmanship from his feet, Bolívar hurries westward, pushes his way again, in a frail boat, against the current of the mighty Orinoco, reaches again the rolling llanos, the domain of Páez the Centaur. All the way his mind seethes with the great idea which has come to him, which is torturing and delighting him, filling him with visions of victory

more dazzling than any that have yet visited his tumultuous brain.

But, first, Páez must be brought to book. Bolívar needs the Centaur, but the Centaur needs a good scolding. There must be no more talk from him of revolt, of wresting from his chief the supreme command. Before, with Páez, it was a task for Bolívar the Fox; here is work for Bolívar the Lion.

With flashing eyes and peremptory questionings, he confronts Páez. And the terror of the llanos, he who hates control and despises authority, he of the robust torso and mighty right arm, is awed to humility by the puny young sprig of Carácas nobility.

He has naught to offer but lame excuses for his disaffection, his attempted revolt. Pressed into a corner by the vehemence of his chief, he finally surrenders unconditionally, eschews further plotting, stretches out his hand and offers unreserved loyalty.

Again Bolívar's iron will has triumphed; again, confronted with a crisis such as might well have wrecked all his plans, he has shown his ability to crush the will of other men, to mold them to his bidding, to break their opposition, and having broken it, to preserve in them the capacity for rendering invaluable service as subordinate instruments in his grandiose designs.

Once more Simon Bolívar has made a bid to be included in the list of the world's great men. Surely, in the misty realm where that list is compiled, there must have been an approving nod.

Páez's offer of loyal coöperation is no empty gesture. Morillo, the indefatigable Spaniard, having marched southward after his victory at La Puerta, is on the plains,

menacing the patriots with destruction. Desirous of ingratiating himself again with his chief, the Centaur, in a burst of supreme audacity, leads some hundred and fifty of his most trusted followers across the Arauca river and rides, at their head, squarely up to the main body of Morillo's army.

For a moment the Spaniards are breathless with amazement; recovering, they launch against the audacious llaneros a cloud of cavalry, and, behind these, line upon line of infantry. Páez gives the command to his men to retreat—they turn their horses, gallop, apparently in panic, back toward Bolívar's camp. With shouts of elation, the Spaniards gallop after them; they preserve no order in their excitement; their squadrons become scattered, many riders are isolated from their comrades; the disorder among the pursuers is as great as the seeming disorder among the pursued.

Suddenly Páez jerks in his reins, brandishes his lance above his head, roars in a voice of thunder:

"Vuelvan caras!" ("Turn your faces!")

It is the trick of Mucuritas over again. As one man, his llaneros rein in their steeds, whirl them around, and lowering their wicked lances, charge straight at the pursuing Spaniards. In a few moments Morillo's apparent victory has been turned into ignominious defeat—his cavalrymen, utterly surprised, hopelessly scattered, are cut down in batches; the infantry, coming up behind in a similar disorder, without the remotest thought of being attacked by a foe apparently put to flight, are trampled and speared and driven back headlong.

Instead of administering a deserved chastisement to an insolent enemy, Morillo finds himself involved in de-

feat, hard put to it to keep his main body from stampeding, deprived of hundreds of his best cavalrymen, of a number scarcely smaller of foot soldiers. No wonder Bolívar is beside himself with delight, no wonder he flings him arms around Páez, no wonder their reconciliation, dubious earlier in the day, is grounded on firm foundations. No wonder the name of Queseras del Medio, the scene of Páez's exploit, thrills Venezuelans to this day.

In the city of Carácas there is a statue of a rider reining in a magnificent charger, so suddenly as to bring it to its hind legs and make it throw back its head at the sudden thrust of the bit between its teeth, while he, wild-eyed, hair streaming in the wind, shakes over his head a lance and, face turned over his shoulder and mouth opened wide, is apparently uttering some ringing word of command.

The rider thus shown is José Antonio Páez the Centaur; what he is supposed to be shouting, to invisible soldiers behind him, is the cry of "Vuelvan caras!" which electrified his llaneros at Queseras del Medio and brought unexpected victory to Simon Bolívar.

Now obstacles have been overcome, Páez is loyal again, Morillo checked and bewildered by the centaur's audacity. The road lies open for the realization of the bright dream which, for months, has been dancing before Simon Bolívar's eyes.

He issues a summons to his principal lieutenants to meet him, listen to a plan he has thought up, give him their advice concerning it. They come together at the

little village of Setenta, in the heart of the llanos, a mere cluster of tumbledown hovels.

Into one of its hovels comes a group of Bolívar's comrades. They are puzzled—what can he want of them?

In silence they form a semicircle around him. Outside, rolling seas of prairie stretch away, flat and silent, to the distant horizon.

Chapter XII

SCARECROWS OF DESTINY

THERE are no chairs nor stools. No tables. Bolívar's comrades-in-arms squat on the floor of the hut, or lean against its walls. Some of them sit on the skulls of cattle, bleached white by sun and rain. Soublette, the faithful, is there; Anzoátegui, brave and gloomy; Rooke, ever cheerful, bubbling with Hibernian wit. Half a dozen others. Pacing the earthen floor in their midst, excited and bright-eyed, Bolívar casts a glance over their bronzed faces. Then he begins to explain his plan:

"Here in Venezuela our enemy, Morillo, has something like seventeen thousand men. We have barely seven thousand. In New Granada, on the other hand, there are scarcely seven thousand Spaniards, scattered over a large area. Suppose we take, say, two thousand men, effect a junction with Santander, who can bring up, say, twelve hundred, and give battle to the enemy in New Granada."

Puzzled expressions creep into bronzed faces. Santander? New Granada? Why, what does Bolívar mean? Santander is in Casanare, many, many miles away. New Granada is on the other side of miles of desolate plains, on the other side of a grim, towering, impassable wall of mountains.

Is Bolívar mad? At last someone speaks up:

"Give battle in New Granada? Why, to do that we should have to march across the Andes!"

Bolívar nods.

"Certainly."

They look at each other. Over the Andes! Such a march has never been accomplished in the whole history of Venezuela. It is impossible!—except for an army of supermen! Bolívar stands there quietly, in their midst, studying one face after another.

They shift their feet, knit their brows; those squatting on the bleached skulls lean elbows on knees, fix their chief with doubting eyes. Questions are asked; objections made.

"Can't be done," declares Iribárren, intrepid leader of cavalry. "Not a man nor horse could survive!" Rangel, another centaur, agrees with his comrade. Others shake their heads—it would be suicide. Bolívar stands, unmoved.

"We shall march over the Andes!" he insists.

His eyes burn. The flame of his genius, leaping outward from his puny frame, eats, little by little, into the breasts of the others.

One of the first to catch fire is Rooke, the Irishman. Up from the white skull on which he has been sitting he leaps, eyes flashing with an excitement worthy of his dauntless commander.

"General Bolívar, lead the way!" he cries. "Say the word and I'll march with you not only over the Andes but right down to Patagonia!—all the way to Cape Horn, general!"

Nods. Handshakes. Excited murmurs. The most au-

dacious plan ever conceived by Simon Bolívar, one of the most audacious that ever entered the mind of any military commander in any country, has been launched. Bolívar goes from group to group, from man to man, suggesting, discussing, weighing chances, waving his nervous hands in gesticulation.

Once across the Andes, with the Spaniards beaten, Bogotá, the capital, in their hands, the patriots will have a splendid base of operations. They will be in the very heart of northern South America. Returning northward, their old battalions reformed and reëquipped, new battalions to support them, they can beard Morillo in Venezuela and drive him back to his native Spain. Or, marching southward, toward Quito and Lima in Peru—even as far as Chile and the Argentine—they can link up with the forces of the heroic San Martín—who has already crossed the Andes from east to west—and the other leaders of the patriots at the other end of South America and, together, fight the battle of freedom until not a Spanish banner waves between the isthmus of Panama and Cape Horn!

What a plan! Magnificent! Napoleonic! The flame of Bolívar's inspiration has now set them all on fire; on all sides, now, eyes are flashing as brightly, tongues wagging as rapidly, as his own. To Bogotá! What will Morillo say? What will posterity say? Over the Andes! Bravo!

Across the great mountain range, in New Granada, whence Bolívar had invaded his native Venezuela in 1813, resistance to Spain, though almost crushed, had not entirely died. Brave patriots there still dreamed of

independence, undeterred by the thought that, for harboring similar dreams, Camilo Torres and wise Caldas and many another New Granadan had faced the firing squads of Morillo and others among King Ferdinand's servants.

After resistance had almost perished in the field, there were New Granadans valiant enough to continue it in secret. Plots were hatched under the very nose of the Spanish authorities at Bogotá, capital of New Granada. There a brave woman, Policarpa Salabarrieta by name, dared to help those conspiring against the king across the water, though she knew only too well what fate might befall her. The Spaniards discovered her activities. She was arrested, haled before a tribunal, condemned to death. Courageous to the end, eyes bright with patriotism, she stood before a dozen Spanish soldiers, their rifles pointed at her heart.

A sharp word of command, a volley, and Policarpa lay dead on the ground—to live forevermore in the history of her country.

Not even this example quenched the thirst for freedom in New Granada. As Bolívar well knew, others as brave as this heroine and martyr were still working there for deliverance from their foreign masters. Confident that, once he was across the mountains, volunteers would flock to him, Bolívar had already sent Santander—himself a New Granadan—to the border province of Casanare, to organize the preliminaries of the audacious invasion which he contemplated. For weeks now Santander had been across the boundary of New Granada, gathering recruits, drilling them, storing up supplies, studying the chances for an army to make that march

across the Andes which, to most men, seemed fantastically impossible.

Not yet had Bolívar succeeded in freeing his native Venezuela. Morillo, his Spanish arch-foe, with headquarters at Carácas, controlled most of the settled portions of the country. Bolívar was reduced to Angostura, to the region watered by the mighty Orinoco and its affluents—a region far from the heart of Venezuela.

No matter! The road to freedom for Venezuela lay through New Granada! To bring independence to his native land he must first liberate its neighbor.

Not in vain had Camilo Torres, his friend of earlier days, died for his country; not in vain Caldas, the savant, and Policarpa, proudly eyeing the firing squad lined up to shoot her! Simon Bolívar was on the way!

May 26, 1819.

Out of the village of Mantecal, on the Venezuelan llanos, Bolívar's little column starts on its great march. Thirteen hundred infantry, eight hundred cavalry. Páez, left behind, is to harass Morillo, execute sudden attacks on his forces, make the Spaniard believe that, encamped somewhere on the plains is the main force of the patriots, under Bolívar himself, awaiting better weather for the renewal of hostilities in Venezuela. Further to the east, Bermúdez is likewise to feint and harass and deceive, supported by the doughty Urdaneta. Occupied in repelling their attacks, how is Morillo, veteran though he is, to guess that his principal foe, Simon Bolívar, is far to the south, bent on accomplishing a feat which, if successful, will leave every Spaniard gasping with astonish-

ment? Ay, how is he to guess this, especially since the rains have set in, the torrential rains of southern lands, which convert paths into seas of mud, soak and chill men to the marrow, turn clothes to moldy rags, cake rifles with rust, reduce munitions to worthlessness?

Forward!

At the very outset of the march rain comes down in torrents. Water and mist hide sky and landscape, the plains over which the column trudges become a quagmire, a lake. Water reaches up to the soldiers' waists; they advance at the pace of snails, their garments saturated, holding rifles and ammunition over their heads, in a desperate attempt to preserve them for the combats to come. There are roaring rivers to ford; men, stepping heedlessly into them, are swept to death in the current. Small rafts must be constructed from cattle hides to get munitions and equipment across; slowly and painfully weary, half-nude soldiers propel these over the swift waters.

Breasting the rushing torrents, some of the men suddenly give screams of agony. They have been attacked by the bloodthirsty "caribe" fish, with their razor-sharp teeth. Attracted by the blood tinting the waters, swarms of the voracious caribe converge to the fords, sink teeth into bare limbs, tear flesh until bones are laid bare. Unless those attacked can reach shore they are doomed; once they sink into the water, weakened by stabbing pain and loss of blood, there is no hope for them. And while, terrified and bleeding, they are struggling to escape the caribe, warning shouts come from comrades battling their way across the ford.

"Caimanes! Beware the caimanes!" Another stam-

pede as, churning its way through the turbid waters, an alligator, of wicked eyes and repulsive bulk, becomes visible.

One week the march across the flooded plains lasts; one week which reduces Bolívar's soldiers to ragged, emaciated specters. Throughout those seven days he remains unflinching, indomitable. Bestriding his horse, he leans down to speak words of cheer to staggering private soldiers; digging in his spurs, he rides into torrential waters, to lend a hand to some man about to be swept from his footing or devoured by the ravenous caribe.

Forward! At sight of Bolívar's burning eyes, curses are swallowed, groans suppressed. Gritting their teeth, driving weary limbs to further desperate exertions, his soldiers toil onward.

At Tame, a little New Granadan town, feeble cheers resound, weak arms swing rusted rifles. For here is Santander, with twelve hundred fresh soldiers of New Granada—and here are beef and salt and bananas—and rest!

Not for long, however. "Forward!" shouts the hoarse voice of Simon Bolívar. Forward!—and upward!—for now the plains have been passed and the first slopes leading toward the peaks of the Andes lie ahead.

The next five days eclipse the weary week that has gone before. As the soldiers, all natives of the plains, climb painfully and slowly, their lungs seem about to burst, for the air grows steadily thinner. Blood pounds at eardrums, drips from men's noses; and, all the while, icy winds set the poor wretches to helpless shivering. Of what use against the biting cold are the few rags

which have survived those seven days of soaking rain? The men might as well be naked! Yet onward and upward they trudge, over gloomy ramparts of stone—barefooted, bareheaded, well-nigh exhausted, slipping over the coating of ice that now covers the path, often falling to the ground, with shaking limbs, sometimes never to stand again. Higher and higher!

And now comes the dread sickness of the mountains, the sickness that robs men of breath, plunges them into hideous nausea, paralyzes limbs and numbs brains. Soldier after soldier carries a fevered hand to a burning brow, lurches and staggers, finally topples over the edge of the narrow path to be dashed to pieces below, or, slumping down beside the path, drops into a heavy slumber from which there is no awakening; or, a prey to horrible attacks resembling those caused by hydrophobia, perishes in torment, with eyeballs rolling as in madness, and foam dripping from stiffening lips.

Many are kept alive by being beaten by comrades, beaten until the blood spurts from their gashes. Cries of agony stab the icy air, yet mercilessly the whipping is kept up, lest those under the lash, suddenly freed from it, close weary eyes in the stupor that means death.

One by one, many of the horses perish. Some, slipping on the ice-crusted pathway, fall over the edge, carrying with them precious munitions and supplies. Others, dropping to their knees, roll imploring eyes at their masters until, collapsing completely, they die in convulsions which stretch them across the narrow pathway, bringing to a halt panting men and staggering beasts until their corpses can be pushed over the abyss.

The march is made almost in silence; every ounce of

energy must be put into the fight to keep alive. Of the few who rise above the hardships of the march, keep a smile on their faces, a joke on their lips, Colonel Rooke is the ringleader. Nothing can rob him of his good-humor; he actually has the audacity to extol the Andean weather!

"The climate on the llanos of Venezuela was good enough," remarks the incorrigible Irishman, "but this mountain climate is the finest in the world!" His comrades, especially Anzoátegui, gloomiest of the gloomy, listen in amazement; they think Rooke is going mad. But his apparent madness does them a service, for, in scoffing at him and calling him lunatic, they forgot for a moment bleeding noses and freezing hands and bursting lungs.

To cap it all, there are Spaniards to fight! Astride the path at Paya are seven hundred of them, a vanguard stationed there by Barreiro, commander of the Spanish forces between Bolívar and his goal, Bogotá, who has got wind of the march and taken steps to thwart it.

Gathering their last shreds of energy, the invaders brush aside this detachment. It falls back to where Barreiro has stationed the bulk of his forces in a strategic position. There, thinks the Spaniard, he can wait until Bolívar, in his temerity, dares give battle. For—as Barreiro sees it—the only road for the Venezuelan and his men, if they would advance on Bogotá, is the one leading past his position.

Bolívar, however, knows better.

"Tonight," he tells his ragged, shivering, hollow-eyed soldiers, "we shall continue our advance over the Páramo de Pisba!"

The Páramo de Pisba! Again, as at the council when he first unfolded his plan to march over the Andes, he hears gasps of astonishment, ejaculations of incredulity. The páramo is a bleak, cruel, mountain plateau, high above the snowline, swept by piercing winds, rimmed with rock, over which gray clouds lower, where nothing green grows, where rain pours, where—objectors tell Bolívar—neither man nor beast can live.

"We are going over the páramo," says Bolívar, clenching his jaws tightly together.

Forward! Slipping, staggering, wrapping around them the shreds of their garments, the little army toils up toward the plateau. In its icy, solitary grimness it looks like a nightmare-vision, like something unreal, like something imagined by Dante for the most hideous regions of his Inferno. Icy rain falls, icy winds pierce the soldiers through and through. No chance to kindle fires! Many of the soldiers, having thrown away their last supply of food in order to lighten the burdens of the march, suffer atrociously from hunger. Scores lie down to die; others, hoping to snatch a few minutes of rest, are frozen to death in their sleep.

All night they climb and stumble. "Hellish, isn't it?" mutters the gloomy Anzoátegui. "Not at all," retorts cheery Rooke. "Oh, come now, you have lost man after man of your command from exhaustion and cold!" expostulates the pessimist. "What of it?" says Rooke, grinning amiably, "They were the worst men in my battalion. The best are still alive!"

With dawn reddening the sky, the exhausted, decimated column droops wearily down the slope of the páramo. At the foot of it, Bolívar, gaunt and shivering,

steps forward to congratulate each group, to shake frozen fingers in his own, to clap weary fellows, more like scarecrows than humans, on the back, to tell them that they have accomplished the impossible, the superhuman, enrolled themselves among the greatest heroes of history, added to the annals of their country a glorious and imperishable page.

Man after man, dropping to the ground, utterly fagged out, gazes upward at the terrible plateau, at the rock wall, shrouded in fog and drenched with icy drizzle, over which he has just scrambled. And, as they eye that region of Dantesque horror, as they think of their sufferings up yonder, of the frozen corpses of comrades stretched up there in a sleep without end, soldier after soldier swears:

"Never again! Better death fighting the Spaniards in front of us than retreat over the páramo!" In a blend of abject weariness and fanatical determination they encamp at the foot of the mountain wall.

Then, little by little, as life returns to stiff limbs, as haggard eyes of Venezuelans and New Granadans meet the drooping gaze of Englishmen and Scots and Irishmen, smiles flit over weary features, numbed hands stretch out to clasp others equally numb, jokes are born on wan lips. For the realization of what they have done is creeping slowly into the shadowy consciousness of Bolívar's men!

Ha! They are across the great mountain chain, these human scarecrows! They huddle around the campfires in their rags—weary, emaciated beyond all telling—but their eyes burn with fanatical light, and they shout to

each other with the ring of triumph in their voices, while the fires flare up toward the skies and the sentries peer into the darkness—toward the south, toward the fertile plains of New Granada, where the Spaniards are, the still unbeaten Spaniards.

Around the fires huddle the scarecrows—Venezuelans and men of New Granada—English veterans of the Napoleonic Wars—Indians, nearly naked—Irish and Scotch adventurers—Anzoátegui, the grumbler, Rooke, the ever-cheerful—and loudly they chatter and wildly they boast, for they know quite well what fine fellows they are! What of it if they look more like beggars than soldiers? What if they are in tatters, footsore, grimy, unshaven? Have they not just made one of the great marches of military history? Will not the little ragged battalions to which they belong be counted among the heroic armies of the world?

Of course they will! Has not Simon Bolívar himself told them so, in one of his fiery bursts of eloquence, replete with all his usual hyperbole? Grand names like Bonaparte and Hannibal have tumbled from his lips. He has told them that they have equaled—nay, surpassed!—the Carthaginian's passage of the Alps to measure swords with Rome, the Corsican's march over the icy St. Bernard to annihilate the Austrians drawn up on the plains of Italy. Oh, what grand fellows, what prodigious fellows we are, chuckle the scarecrows, wagging stubbly beards on dirty chins, giving a hitch to garments so torn as scarcely to deserve the name of clothing! Shamelessly they brag of their actions on the mountain march of yesterday, of the magnificent feats they are going to accomplish in the battles of tomorrow.

Anzoátegui crouches among them, still growling; Rooke, smiling as he always smiles, finds all well in the best of all possible worlds.

High flare the campfires; into the blackness the wary sentries peer. Simon Bolívar, with burning eyes, his cloak hugged tight around his thin limbs, stands deep in thought.

Tomorrow? Across the Andes he most certainly is, he and his unkempt battalions, but Barreiro and the Spaniards have yet to be accounted for. What if Barreiro, barring the way to Bogotá, wins the impending fight? Of what use is the most splendid strategy if the battle to which it leads is lost?

Battle? Ay, there will be battling, bloody battling, on the morrow. Suppose the Spaniards—

No, by God, never, thrice never! Bolívar clenches his fists. He looks toward the ragged groups of his men, squatting around the fires, chewing their rough fare, bandying reminiscences of the great march over the Andes.

Are these heroes doomed to be beaten? Were the visions of victory that danced before his eyes on the desolate Páramo de Pisba mere cheating illusions?

No, never, perish the thought! Men of destiny they are, these smelly, hairy scarecrows, and he, Simon Bolívar, is the man chosen by destiny to lead them across glorious fields of victory to dazzling immortality! Ay, laurels have been decreed to all of them in the mysterious councils of fate, and the best are to be his, Simon Bolívar's—better than those set aside for Santander, for Anzoátegui, better than those of all of them!

Battle? Victory? Oh, it is sure to come, it *must* come!

But—but—suppose that damned Barreiro—now how many men has that cursed Spaniard got, anyhow? Down goes Bolívar's chin on his breast, a frown brings wrinkles to his brow. "Suppose—"

Up flare the campfires! And, from somewhere in the shadows, comes the cheerful voice of Rooke:

"Carácas, the capital of Venezuela, is a much finer town than this Bogotá we are going to capture in a few days."

"No, Bogotá beats Carácas," says another voice.

"Carácas, I assure you, is a much better place." Rooke is still polite, but insistent.

"Bogotá is a better town, I tell you!"

"Bogotá, bah! Carácas is far superior!"

It begins to look like a quarrel. Neither champion will relinquish his claims. Nervous fingers close on sword hilts. Eyes flash. Comrades edge up to the disputants.

Little by little calm is restored. And it transpires, during the peace-making, that Rooke has never seen Carácas in his whole life!

"Then why praise it so extravagantly?" ask puzzled voices.

"Is it not the capital of Venezuela and am I not fighting in the Venezuelan army?" answers the Irishman.

Roars of laughter. All is well again. Brightly the campfires burn, brightly shine the fanatical eyes of the scarecrows of destiny. And Bolívar, pacing up and down, enveloped in his threadbare cloak, thinks deeply.

His thoughts bear golden fruit. By a rapid march, so rapid that Barreiro does not get wind of it until it is well under way, Bolívar throws his little army across the Spanish rear, across Barreiro's line of communications with Bogotá, where the cruel viceroy, Sámano, nervously mounts guard with a handful of soldiers.

There is nothing for Barreiro—already outwitted by Bolívar's march over the páramo—to do but abandon his strong position and start after his crafty adversary.

At Pantano de Vargas they clash, in a welter of muddy swampland.

The men of Bolívar, hitching up their rags, move into battle. With flashing eyes and sweeping gesticulation, their leader directs them. The test has come.

On, scarecrows! Fix rusty bayonets to rusty rifles! Straighten your breech-clouts, copper-hued Indians—clench your jaws, men of England!—close ranks, Irish and Scotch!—and out with your naked swords, all of you, and up with your pistols, and forward! forward! for there they are, in solid ranks, knee to the ground, eyes glancing along glistening gun barrels, these Spaniards who would insolently dispute with you the path to glory! Damn them! At them, Anzoátegui! Charge, Santander! Cut them down! That's it, Rooke!—smash into them!

Hm!—not so easy.

Bolívar's thin face pales. Barreiro and his men are showing themselves worthy of the proud name of Spaniard. Volley after volley they pour into the charging scarecrows.

What?—can men of destiny lose? Never! What is

this?—the Spaniards countercharging? The scarecrows breaking—running? Has Barreiro won? Oh, never, by God in heaven, never that!

Bolívar puts spurs to his horse, leaps, in a madness of excitement, into the very heart of the fighting.

There come the Spaniards! "Viva España!" they shout—and their voices have the ring of victory. Is all lost? Never!

He looks about him. There is Colonel Rondón, the brave Rondón, and behind him a knot of his lancers, lads from the Venezuelan plains. Bolívar, panting and wild-eyed, gallops up to him.

"Colonel Rondón, save your country!"

Ah, it is men like Simon Bolívar, pets of destiny, who, in the frenzy of their inspiration, seem to deflect the very course of history.

"Colonel Rondón, save your country!"

Rondón draws his sword, digs his spurs into his horse, calls, in thundering tones, to his lancers.

They sweep forward, they strike the advancing enemy like human thunderbolts. Pistols flash and spit, lances cut into Spanish breasts, to be pulled out, dripping red. More of Bolívar's soldiers, infantry and cavalry, heartened by Rondón's splendid charge, close in behind him.

The Spaniards stand firm, for they are brave men, and tough. But the impact is too rude. Before Rondón, before the ever-increasing force behind him, Barreiro's lines waver, bend, break. From all the rest of the battlefield, Bolívar's men close in, yelling like lunatics.

Victory!

Again that night the scarecrows shout and boast around the campfires. Not all, though. Scores of them lie rigid and staring, under the stars.

And Rooke? What of him?

There he lies, deathly white. A surgeon is cutting off his arm, cruelly torn by a Spanish bullet, without wringing from the Irishman even the faintest semblance of flinching—though he is in agony.

"A beautiful arm it is, doctor," says the incorrigible joker. "Mind, you treat it nicely."

The severed arm lies beside him. Rooke picks it up, waves it over his head.

"Long live my country!" he cries feebly.

Bending over him, friends, tears starting to their eyes, gently ask to what country he refers—to England?—to Ireland?

"To the country about to give me a grave!" replies Rooke, with his last grin and chuckle. A few minutes later he is dead. Comrades, South American and European, bury him that night, in the soil of the land for whose freedom he has died. Bolívar, in heartfelt words, extols his loyalty and bravery. Indeed, he has lost one of his best fighters.

But there is no time for mourning.

What of Barreiro?

The battle of Pantano de Vargas has cost him hundreds of men, but he has many hundreds more. There is plenty of fight left in them—and a mad desire for revenge. What!—are men wearing the uniform of Spain to be beaten by a gang of ragged scarecrows? Never! Bolívar has by no means heard the last of brave Barreiro and his regiments.

Not for nothing, though, has Simon Bolívar been at the game of war for the better part of ten years; not for nothing has he circumvented Spaniards in the Magdalena Valley, matched wits with them on the daring march across Venezuela in 1813, with its rough-and-tumble battles, pitted himself against bloodthirsty Boves and Morales. Years of alternating victory and defeat have taught him the moves in the great game—he is a master at it now, a veteran, an old fox. Barreiro is brave, but he is no match for Simon Bolívar.

Again the Spaniard has placed himself in a strong position, squarely across Bolívar's road to Bogotá. Warily the Venezuelan reconnoiters—the position is too strong—frontal attack might be suicidal. Later there will be plenty of opportunity for grand cavalry charges, the shock of infantry against infantry, all the sweep and panoply of war. Now a trick must do it.

Showing his full force to Barreiro as if about to give battle, Bolívar suddenly countermarches, moves slowly away, as if merely to encamp for the night and offer battle on the morrow. Instead, however, he cautiously marches southward to the important town of Tunja—where he was so well received by the ill-fated Camilo Torres and the New Granadan government of yesteryear. After giving the Spanish garrison there the surprise of its life, he occupies the town. So sudden and secret has been Bolívar's march that Barreiro, convinced that his enemy is sleeping just beyond his pickets, has carelessly got out of touch. Now Bolívar, at Tunja, is once more between him and Bogotá—the Spaniard's strong position has been robbed of its strength by the crafty Venezuelan. There is nothing for

Barreiro to do but face his army about and start at hot speed after his adversary.

Meanwhile Bolívar's ragged and weary men have exultantly equipped themselves with hundreds of muskets taken from the Spanish garrison of Tunja, and they have captured many horses, and gorged themselves with good food stored there for Spanish consumption, and some of them have found garments with which to clothe naked limbs. Filled with new vigor, wreathed in new smiles, they line up in the plaza of the town, ready to move as soon as their commander finds out what Barriero's next step will be. Bolívar's scouts are scouring the countryside seeking information. But their reports come in too slowly for their high-strung chief. He himself, vaulting on his horse, gallops away with a few companions to do a bit of personal reconnoitering.

Obviously, Barreiro will again try to put himself between Bolívar and Bogotá. But will he march toward the New Granadan capital through Tunja, or by the road leading westward of Tunja to Bogotá across the bridge of Boyacá? At last the impatient Liberator learns what he wants to know—Barreiro, with his entire force, is marching as fast as possible on the westerly road; the thing to do is to intercept him at the bridge and stake all on one pitched battle.

Drums beat, bugles pierce the morning stillness. The scarecrows fall into line, still munching the bread which the Spaniards had all unwittingly stored up for them at Tunja. Shoulder arms! Off for the bridge of Boyacá.

At the bridge advance guards of both armies meet in spirited encounter. More and more troops of both sides come up. In the Spanish center, Barreiro himself

directs the fighting, thirsting to retrieve his defeat at Pantano de Vargas, his subsequent carelessness.

Against him the gloomy Anzoátegui and the fiery Santander range the flower of their infantry, flanked by Rondón, hero of Pantano de Vargas, with his tough squadrons of Venezuelan centaurs.

The fighting becomes general and furious. Anzoátegui hurls his two best infantry battalions in a smashing attack against Barreiro's center. He shakes it, despite terrific artillery and rifle fire, and, driving home a bayonet charge at the crucial moment, crushes the life out of the Spanish resistance. Then, forming every available man into line, Anzoátegui launches a magnificent movement of envelopment against Barreiro's flank.

Spaniards and patriots meet in a crashing shock. In the middle of the Spanish lines brave Barreiro himself, hoarse and sweating, shouts to his men to stand firm for the glory of Spain. Opposite them grim-visaged Anzoátegui, valiant Santander, intrepid Rondón, Venezuelans, Britons, New Granadans, dust-caked and blood-spattered, fire and rip and stab.

And, in their midst, Simon Bolívar, eyes shining, hair tousled, sword drawn, screams orders to right and left, curses, grinds his teeth, knowing full well that here and now glory and immortality are to be lost or won for him—lost by some lucky Spanish forward movement, won by some brilliant drive from the hard-pressed, furiously fighting scarecrows of Anzoátegui and Santander and Rondón. On, scarecrows! Rip into them, bayonet them, drive them back! On, on, on!

There comes Barreiro, splendid in his valor, at the head of his last two reserve battalions, squarely into

the center of Anzoátegui's men. "Viva España!" Again there is the crash of horse against horse, man against man, red spurts of rifle fire, boom of cannon, glitter of lance and bayonet and sword. "Viva la Libertad!" Here, right at this spot, now or never, liberty is to be won for Venezuela and New Granada, glory for every scarecrow down to the lowest in the ranks, imperishable laurels for Simon Bolívar! That—or ruin and oblivion! Stand firm, Anzoátegui—by all that is holy, stand firm!

Superbly the scarecrows meet the last charge of the Spaniards; superbly they stop it and hold it and break it. Bleeding, reeling, the battalions of Barreiro fall back. With a yell of elation, the men of Anzoátegui lurch forward in pursuit.

Victory!

No more hope for brave Barreiro. In vain he tries to re-form broken squadrons, shattered battalions. No use! Fortune has turned her back on him—it is to Simon Bolívar that the jade is beckoning and smiling. Beset on every side by the yelling centaurs of Rondón, by Britons almost lifted from their native calm by the whirr of the wings of victory, by the exultant men of Anzoátegui and Santander, the beaten soldiers of Barreiro give up the fight. Nearly two thousand of them, officers and men, including their commander, are made prisoners by the men of Bolívar, as they close in from every side. Of Barreiro's whole force a mere handful manage to get away on the road to Bogotá.

Arriving at the New Granadan capital, panting and panic-stricken, they spread the news of their leader's vain stand. Sámano, the cruel viceroy, quaking with terror, flees without further ado, leaving the road to

the capital open to Simon Bolívar and the men who, with him, have crossed flooded plains and lofty battlements of rock and freezing páramos—to Simon Bolívar and the heroes of Boyacá, to Simon Bolívar and his scarecrows of destiny!

In motley squads, dirty and unkempt, they slouch into Bogotá. Around them, delirious with joy, crowd the liberated Bogotanos. "Viva el Libertador!" They push past the lines of soldiers, to where Bolívar, smiling, sits his horse, to reach up to him hands shaking with joy, to shout congratulations.

Lovely young girls, pressing into the ranks, offer flowers to the tanned, sweating soldiery. Over matted clumps of hair and dirty necks they throw pretty garlands—the recipients, embarrassed, nervously hitching up trousers indecent in their scantiness, bashfully nod thanks. Beside the long lines of scarecrows rides Anzoátegui, once more plunged in gloom, Santander, smiling in triumph—solemn Britons, chuckling Irishmen—every one shoeless and stockingless—wildly excited Venezuelans and men of New Granada.

Victory!

PART TWO

ON THE CREST

Chapter XIII

INDEPENDENT VENEZUELA

BY his audacious occupation of Bogotá, the capital of New Granada, Bolívar drove a wedge between the two halves of Spain's vast colonial empire in South America.

To the north of him lay most of New Granada, a land as large as France, Germany, England, Scotland, Ireland and Wales rolled into one. Held by Spain for more than three centuries, it was now—thanks to Bolívar's victorious trans-Andean march and his subsequent operations—almost entirely in the hands of the rebels against the Spanish king.

In the same direction lay Venezuela, the Liberator's native country, as big as France and Germany combined, still held in large part by the Spaniards, but with a hold far less firm than before their adversary's daring move on Bogotá. For, when he started on his march across the mountains, he had been able to trust only to the strength of his base along the Orinoco and Apure, to the valor of his little army, and to his allies, Mariño and Bermúdez, in eastern Venezuela, and the wild llaneros of Páez. Now, on the other hand, in addition to the parts of southern and eastern Venezuela occupied by the patriots, Bolívar dominated practically the entire territory of New Granada—rich, fertile, capable of

supplying recruits by the thousand to swell his forces in the new and spectacular campaigns already taking shape in his tireless brain.

South of Bogotá lay the territory of Quito (now Ecuador), a land as large as Italy, named after its capital, the northern outpost of the ancient Inca Empire in South America. Over Quito the Spaniards still held sway, but Bolívar was about to add it—on paper—to his conquests. This, to be sure, was a flagrant case of counting chickens before they were hatched, but audacious always and this time endowed with prophetic vision, he insisted on considering Quito even now as part of the vast area freed by him for the simple reason that he intended to conquer it, and, buttressed on his absolute confidence in his lucky star, felt no doubt whatever that the Spaniards occupying it would soon succumb to the irresistible advance of his armies. Including the domain of Quito, as yet unconquered, the realm which he meant to unite under the banner of liberty covered slightly more than 1,000,000 square miles—an area twice as great as France, Germany and Italy combined.

To the southward of Quito lay Peru, land of the ancient Incas, heart of Spanish America, a country twice as big as France, Germany and the British Isles rolled into one, and nearly six times as large as that Spain which, for over three centuries, had despotically guided Peruvian destinies.* Ever since the last Inca emperor had been overthrown by bloodthirsty Pizarro, amid ruth-

* It must be remembered that Peru, at this time, included what is now Bolivia. Whereas its total area is now 533,000 square miles it was, in 1819, considerably over 1,000,000 square miles.

less destruction and massacre, Peru had been one of the proudest gems in Spain's royal crown. From its mines untold tons of precious metal had been extracted by greedy servants of the Spanish kings; from its ports the Spanish treasure fleet had annually sailed away to Spain, to cast anchor at Cádiz (unless Drake or some equally bold freebooter intervened) and bring measureless wealth to the monarch on whose dominions the sun never set.

On Quito and Peru Simon Bolívar now cast longing eyes. Would it not be glorious to bring to both of them independence from Spain, to break the hold there of haughty Castile after it had gone unchallenged for three hundred years?

Nor was the ambitious Caraqueño alone in thinking such ambitious thoughts. Far to the southward another hero of the South American wars for independence was laying plans to march northward—just as Bolívar dreamed of marching south—and ousting the generals of Ferdinand VII from the rich land of Peru. José de San Martín—a man whose name, in South America, shines side by side with that of Bolívar in unapproached and imperishable glory—having already freed the Argentine, his native land, had crossed the Andes, lying between that country and Chile, by means of a march as daring and successful as that of Bolívar from Venezuela to New Granada, and, after winning brilliant victories at Chacabuco and Maipó, had completely broken the power of Spain over Chile. Now, flushed with success, San Martín had decided to bring freedom to Peru likewise, and, maybe, make it a part of a confederation of South American States.

So the Spaniards in Peru, strong though they were, were not in a particularly enviable position, with Bolívar lusting to descend upon them from the north and San Martín already planning to attack them from the south.

First, however, Bolívar had another task to accomplish: he must free his native country of Venezuela. There the doughty Morillo, with thousands of well-disciplined Spanish soldiers, was still in control of the best parts of the land, including Carácas, the capital. Moreover, Morillo felt that he still had an excellent chance of worsting Bolívar, as he had already done on the field of La Puerta.

Then, too, there were a few scattered forces of Spaniards to be accounted for in the territory of New Granada before that land could truthfully be said to be entirely free of Spanish rule. Also, Bolívar had received reports from Angostura, his temporary Venezuelan capital, indicating that all was not well among the officials he had left behind there.

Before starting back to Venezuela, he showed himself alike just and generous. Pitying the poverty-stricken lot which had befallen the widows of some of the officers who had died crossing the Andes, or in the moment of victory at Pantano de Vargas and Boyacá, he announced that pensions were to be paid to them, running from five hundred to fifteen hundred dollars annually. And, since there was little money in the treasury of the struggling republic and that little was needed for continuing the war on Spain and for other pressing necessities, he defrayed these pensions out of his own pocket.

After putting Santander in charge at Bogotá, Bolívar

set out on the twentieth of September, 1819, on his return to Venezuela. It was high time for him to get back to Angostura, and, by confronting in person the government and Congress of his creation, achieve the double object of nipping their uppishness in the bud and impressing them with the importance of his march across the Andes and the victories which had followed it on the other side of the mountains.

For uppish Congress and government at Angostura had certainly become. "When the cat's away the mice will play." While Bolívar was suffering freezing cold and hardships innumerable, while he was defeating Barreiro and opening for himself the road to the south, where he meant to garner laurels better than any that had yet fallen to him, ambitious grumblers at his temporary Venezuelan capital were accusing him of neglecting Venezuela, of aiming at personal aggrandizement.

Most prominent in the incipient anti-Bolívar conspiracy were Arismendi, the hero of Margarita, and our old malcontent acquaintance, Santiago Mariño. Throughout his career, lured by an ambition which his ability was woefully insufficient to gratify, Mariño could never bring himself to realize that Simon Bolívar was an infinitely better man than himself. As an upshot of the plotting of Arismendi, Mariño and others, Zea, who headed the Angostura government as Vice-President under Bolívar, was forced to resign his post in favor of Arismendi.

The latter, hand in glove with Mariño, proceeded to undermine the authority of the absentee, who, they felt sure, would perish on the passage of the Andes, or—if he ever got across the terrible mountains—would in-

evitably be crushed by the Spaniards awaiting him on the other side.

They reckoned, however, without Simon Bolívar.

After traversing several New Granadan provinces and issuing orders for an active campaign against the remnants of Spain's forces left in the land, the Liberator turned his face toward Venezuela. He rapidly descended the Orinoco, and, on December 17, just short of three months since his departure from Bogotá and seven since the start of the great trans-Andean march, he put in a sudden appearance at Angostura.

He was received with cheers and salvos of cannon. Arismendi, returning from a conference with Mariño, had just reached the opposite bank of the Orinoco; he thought the cheers and salvos for him. But he soon realized his mistake. Crossing the river, he found Bolívar back, very much back, and the populace making an immense fuss over the victor of Pantano de Vargas and Boyacá.

As usual with plotters suddenly brought face to face with Simon Bolívar, exposed to his fire-darting eyes and crisp language, Arismendi was cowed and utterly disarmed. Overawed by this master of men, he promptly resigned the Vice-Presidency so arrogantly assumed by him. Content with the collapse of the opposition against him, Bolívar took no steps to punish Arismendi. And Mariño, just as at the time he and Piar were plotting, was again allowed to go scot-free. The Liberator could well afford to be magnanimous; his victory was complete.

The Congress of the Republic, again wholly subservient to the man who had just freed a land larger

than Venezuela, assembled with all its uppishness eliminated, desirous merely to do Bolívar's bidding. Zea, eager to curry favor, made a grand speech lauding him to the skies. Amid immense enthusiasm, Bolívar was named President not merely of Venezuela this time, but of an entirely new and far vaster republic—to which the name of Colombia was given. It comprised Venezuela, New Granada and the territory to the southward, then known as Quito, and now called Ecuador. Thus Bolívar, three short years before a proscribed and penniless exile, borrowing a few dollars at a time in Jamaica, found himself the head of an enormous free nation, successfully defying the might of Spain. To be sure, Morillo still controlled the best part of Venezuela and there were scattered forces of Spaniards still on New Granadan soil; but the fact remained that, having won Pantano de Vargas and Boyacá, the Liberator had become a far more formidable adversary for Spain than he who, a few months before, had dared the passage of the Andes and risked defeat and possible annihilation at the hands of Barreiro.

Now, for further operations against the Spaniards, he not only had the Orinoco and Apure, to cover his preparations and afford him rapid means of transporting troops, but also nearly the whole of New Granada, a rich and vast land, was now occupied by his soldiers and aflame with new-born patriotism.

For the greatly magnified republic of which Bolívar had been named President, three Vice-Presidents were appointed: Zea for the whole, Roscio for Venezuela, and the New Granadan comrade of Bolívar, General Santander, for New Granada. The appointment of a Vice-

President for Quito was wisely postponed until the troops of Bolívar should conquer it.

That they would soon do so he never doubted for an instant. Wrought up to enthusiasm by his march over the Andes, he was coming more and more to believe himself a chosen man of destiny. What was to keep the victor of Boyacá from driving Morillo out of Venezuela, marching triumphantly southward into Quito, pushing onward, ever onward, until finally, he—Simon Bolívar, the Liberator,—had joined hands with noble José de San Martín, his fellow hero from the Argentine? Ay, what was to prevent? The general whom the gods had crowned victor on the hard-fought field of Boyacá was certainly not to be denied still more dazzling victories! Otherwise—why had not brave Barreiro gathered in the fruits of his bravery?

Onward!

Meanwhile—what of brave Barreiro?

Hardly had Bolívar turned his back on Bogotá, and set out on his long journey to Angostura, than Santander, whom he had left in charge at the New Granadan capital, sullied the laurels won at Pantano de Vargas and Boyacá by an act of atrocious cruelty and injustice, worthy of the worst days of the "war to the death." Taking Barreiro and thirty-eight other Spanish officers from the dungeons where they had been locked up ever since their capture, he had them shot, in his presence, on the main square of the city—shot, they who had merely done their duty as brave men to king and country!—shot in the back, like criminals and traitors!

Barreiro met his fate with unflinching courage. Re-

questing a moment's conversation with Colonel Plaza, one of Bolívar's bravest officers, he entrusted to him a letter.

"It is for the girl I love," said Barreiro. "Please give it to her brother who is an officer in your forces. He will give it to her." Plaza, deeply moved, promised to do so. Then Barreiro, with head held high, went to his death.

When Bolívar heard the news of the executions he was furious. Instantly he wrote to Santander demanding an explanation. The New Granadan replied that the state of popular feeling among the citizens of Bogotá, as a result of the cruelties of Sámano, Morillo and other Spaniards who had ruled in their city, was such as to make the executions inevitable. Also he lamely maintained that there was danger that Barreiro's friends might foment an uprising, free the Spaniard and his fellow prisoners and enable them to recapture Bogotá for Spain.

Neither of these assertions holds water. The Spanish officers were helpless prisoners, well guarded by Santander's victorious troops, and the New Granadan had such firm control of the situation that he might easily have refused to accede to any popular demand for the executions. They are a black stain on Santander's reputation which time has merely made blacker.

Don Pablo Morillo, commander of the forces of Ferdinand VII in Venezuela, the man who had almost done for Bolívar on the fatal battlefield of La Puerta, still held Carácas and a great part of the rest of the country as well. What is more, he had good reason for thinking

that he would soon hold all of it. News had come to him from Spain that a really formidable expedition, far bigger than the one brought out to Spanish America by himself, was about to be sent there to crush the rebels and restore the flouted authority of Ferdinand all the way from the Isthmus of Panama to the Argentine. This expedition, Morillo was informed, would include 20,000 infantry, 3,000 cavalry and a complete artillery train. It was to be equipped with all the thoroughness of an up-to-date nineteenth-century European army. In command would be General O'Donnell, one of Spain's best soldiers.

Morillo, naturally, was delighted at the news and took good care that it reached the ears of Simon Bolívar. And Bolívar was correspondingly worried.

Unfortunately for the Spanish commander and fortunately for the Liberator, the army for crushing the champions of independence in Spanish America was never to set sail from Spain. Some of the troops mutinied and the ensuing discontent among soldiers and civilians in the country was so serious that King Ferdinand called off the expedition and graciously granted his subjects a liberal constitution. Instead of welcoming O'Donnell and his regiments, and proceeding to concoct plans for the destruction of Simon Bolívar, Morillo received orders from the Spanish government to announce to the Venezuelans the granting of the Constitution and to initiate negotiations with Bolívar with a view to the possible conclusion of a treaty of peace.

Morillo was disgusted—all he really understood was fighting—but there was nothing for it but to obey. He wrote to Bolívar—calling him, by the way, President

of the Republic of Colombia, a big concession from haughty Spain to the arch-rebel against her authority. The outcome was a "Treaty for the Regularization of the War" and a six months' armistice. The former was a genuine attempt to do away with the barbarous cruelty which had only too often sullied the hostilities between republicans and Spaniards before and since the "War to the Death" proclamation—and it was signed at Trujillo, the very town whence the earlier grim decree was promulgated in 1813, seven years before. Spaniards and patriots alike—or, at least, many among them—were heartily sick of the appalling atrocities which had aided materially toward desolating hapless Venezuela and robbing her of a third of the million inhabitants who had been alive on her soil a short ten years before.

Morillo now proved himself to be a chivalrous gentleman as well as a good soldier. Having signed treaty and armistice, he expressed a desire to shake hands with his adversary. Bolívar cordially acquiesced. The village of Santa Ana, midway between the Venezuelan's headquarters at Trujillo and the Spaniard's at Carache, was chosen for the meeting.

Morillo rode out toward the village accompanied by a group of his principal officers—including La Torre, who had fought Piar and Páez—and a squadron of cavalry. The first officer from the other side whom the cavalcade encountered was O'Leary, the Irish aide-de-camp of Bolívar.

"With how big an escort is General Bolívar coming to meet me?" asked Morillo.

"A dozen officers only," replied O'Leary.

"Then he has outdone me in generosity," said the

Spanish commander. "I thought my escort too small." He turned to the cavalry squadron.

"Ride back to headquarters!" he ordered. The soldiers at once clattered away, leaving Morillo with none but the officers who had come with him. Morillo pointed to them.

"Is there any man here whom General Bolívar would object to meet?"

O'Leary shook his head.

"Then—forward!" The Spaniards, all in gala uniform, rode onward toward Santa Ana. A short distance from the point selected for the meeting they descried a group of horsemen approaching—a dozen or so, as O'Leary had said.

"Which is General Bolívar?" asked Morillo, and—when O'Leary had told him— "What, that little man with the blue coat and cap, riding a mule?" He seemed disappointed. Doubtless he expected Bolívar to appear in full array, like himself and his escort.

As the two parties met, Bolívar and Morillo leaped from the saddle and embraced each other cordially. The rest of the officers followed suit. After a lunch offered by Morillo, the two leaders who had so often been pitted against each other in furious combat, talked long and earnestly—"swapping stories" of the campaigns in which each had sought, with all his might, to destroy the other. At the end of their talk they were in high good-humor.

"A monument must be erected here to commemorate our meeting!" exclaimed Morillo. "Yes, yes!" chorused republicans and Spaniards. Some of them pushed a big bowlder to an appropriate position. Standing over it,

Bolívar and Morillo clasped hands and again expressed their wish that peace might soon come between Spain and Spanish America. After the friendliest of farewells, the meeting of Santa Ana—a delightful contrast, indeed, to the "war to the death" spirit of 1813—was over. Morillo and Bolívar rode away in opposite directions, never to meet again in war or peace.

Soon afterward the Spanish general was summoned back to Spain. His place as commander of the Spanish forces in Venezuela was taken by the veteran La Torre.

Long before the period assigned to the armistice was over, Spaniards and republicans were again at loggerheads. The city of Maracaibo, in Venezuela, held by the Spaniards, suddenly revolted and declared for independence. Urdaneta, Bolívar's trusted lieutenant, who was a Maracaibero, immediately sent troops to occupy the city. La Torre protested violently; he deemed Urdaneta's action a breach of the armistice. Without mincing words, he told Bolívar so.

Bolívar, however, took another view. He answered La Torre's protest with a long and complicated piece of special pleading, defending Urdaneta. La Torre stuck to his guns. It is difficult to escape the conviction that, in this case, Bolívar, quite ready to resume hostilities against Spain, deemed the occupation of Maracaibo by Urdaneta's troops too good an opportunity to let slip. His arguments have the ring of insincerity; La Torre's seem far better. As both parties to the dispute refused to back down, the armistice was obviously doomed. On March 10, 1821, Bolívar announced that he felt himself at liberty to resume fighting on April 28—though the

armistice had nearly a month to run. La Torre, relying on the prowess of the veteran Spanish regiments turned over to him by Morillo, picked up the proffered gauntlet.

On May 19 Bolívar was at Guanare, in Venezuela. On June 1 he had established his headquarters at San Carlos, in the heart of the region where he and José Félix Ribas had won their spectacular victories of 1813.

From all directions he had summoned his lieutenants for the decisive trial of strength. Páez, with his clouds of wild horsemen, marched toward San Carlos from the llanos; the foreign legionaries converged on that town from Angostura and elsewhere; Urdaneta, marching southward from the coast, was instructed to use his hard-fighting battalions in an endeavor to keep busy as many Spaniards as possible in western Venezuela. At the same time, while Bolívar was massing his forces in the center of the country and Urdaneta marching inland from the coast, Bermúdez, the indefatigable battler for independence in eastern Venezuela, was instructed to march toward Carácas in order to attract against himself as many as possible of La Torre's troops.

Against Bermúdez La Torre moved with promptness and decision. He detached the veteran Morales—who now had behind him a full decade of fighting the Venezuelan patriots—from the main body of Spanish troops with instructions to dispose of Bermúdez.

Morales carried out his instructions like a good soldier. He met Bermúdez, repulsed him, drove him back to the east, whence he had come, and then, countermarching his troops, succeeded in getting them back to

the main Spanish army before the day of decision had dawned.

First honors for Spain!

At San Carlos Bolívar passed in review an army of some 6,000 men—not much, from the ordinary military point of view, but destined profoundly to affect the history of South America. In that little army were the pick of Venezuela's brave infantrymen; valiant Englishmen, Scotchmen and Irishmen, whose mettle the Liberator had tested in a dozen earlier battles; battalions of tough-fibered New Granadans; fiery lancers from the plains. All were afire at the thought that now, at last, after years of fighting with alternating good and bad fortune, the great day had come, the great decision was at hand.

Now, at last, the balance of victory was about to incline, once for all in Venezuela, to proud Ferdinand, seated on his throne across the Atlantic, or to the nervous, voluble little man from Carácas, who, for fifteen years and more, had been lured and guided and inspired by the desire to bring freedom to his native land.

Marshaling his army, Simon Bolívar marched it northward, toward Venezuela's second city, Valencia. At the same time La Torre, with a Spanish army almost exactly equal in numbers, composed largely of veteran, disciplined Spaniards, some of whom had fought Napoleon, marched southward, as eager as Bolívar to hazard everything on the outcome of one pitched battle.

On the morning of June 24, 1821, the troops of Bolívar begin debouching on the great plain of Carabobo.

Taking his breakfast on an eminence commanding a view of the plain, the Liberator's eyes scan an impressive and beautiful picture of the panoply of war.

At the other end of the plain, commanding two roads leading from the south, La Torre's veterans are drawn up. Over the compact masses of Spaniards float, proudly, the red-and-yellow banners of Spain; the morning sunlight strikes flashes from cannon and rifles, swords and martial accoutrements. Staff officers career unceasingly from one body of soldiers to another, bearing instructions; other officers sweep the field with spyglasses, seeking to divine the enemy's plans.

The moment has come! Bright eyes brighter than ever, Simon Bolívar falls to his breakfast; around him his lieutenants speak in quick, sharp phrases. Coffee is hastily gulped, bread hastily chewed, commands issued —and, here and there, a rough joke bandied from man to man. Ambrosio Plaza, one of the bravest of the patriots, grins at Cedeño, a cavalry leader whose valor is often sheer temerity. "I wonder, Cedeño," says Plaza, "what mad stunt will bring you death today?" "Plaza," retorts Cedeño, looking at his handsome comrade, "what a pretty corpse you will make!"

Their badinage is interrupted by the roar of cannon, the rattle of musketry. The battle of Carabobo has begun.

Shunning frontal attack as too perilous, Bolívar has ordered the troops of Páez and the British Legion to turn the Spanish right by stealing along a difficult and little known path through a ravine—if successful, this movement must draw La Torre from his well-chosen position to do battle under less favorable conditions. But Span-

The Battle of Carabobo, 1821. The troops of Páez advancing to attack the Spaniards. (From a painting by Martin Tovar in the Capitol, Carácas, Venezuela)

ish officers, eyes glued to spyglasses, ferret out Bolívar's stratagem. They instantly apprise La Torre of what is going on. He issues crisp orders. Some of his best battalions, moving rightward, face the men of Páez just as they are struggling out of the ravine path. So narrow is it that they are coming not more than two abreast; the Spaniards, confronting them at the top of a steep incline, pour a murderous fire into their ranks.

In the vanguard of the patriots are the "Bravos de Apure," the pick of Bolívar's Venezuelans. But the fire to which they are exposed is too hot for any men, however brave, to face. They waver, they straggle back—scores perish. With wild huzzas, the Spaniards leap down the incline toward the mouth of the ravine.

But they have still to reckon with British valor, British phlegm, British obstinacy.

"Kneel! Fire!" The front rank of the Britons drops knees to the ground, they meet the advancing Spaniards with a terrific volley—and another—and another—which cut red swaths in the enemy's ranks. But the Spaniards rush onward, pour in as good as they get.

Ferrier, the British commander, falls mortally wounded; another Englishman takes command.

"Load!—Fire!" He, too, drops dead.

Another, icy-calm, jumps into the vacant command. "Load!—Fire!" He tumbles, bleeding, to the ground. A fourth Englishman draws his sword and steps into the command.

"Load!—Fire! Steady, men, steady!"

Meanwhile, the Bravos de Apure and the rest of the Venezuelan contingent, which had faced the first terrible hail of Spanish bullets, has had time to re-form behind

the lines of iron-tempered Englishmen. Now, with mad shouts and fixed bayonets, the Venezuelans come charging back—to meet not only the Spaniards who had worsted them, but more fresh battalions, sent up by La Torre to clinch what he thinks is victory.

With a terrific shock, the two bodies meet. Rattle of rifle fire. Rip of bayonets into flesh. Hoarse yells of command. Groans of wounded, trampled underfoot. Thud of corpses hitting the reddened mud. And, in cold English accents: "Steady, there! Load! Fire!"

Now it is the turn of the Spaniards to waver and fall back, while Venezuelans and Britons press forward, the former mad with excitement, the latter still calm despite the hell they have just been through. In other parts of the plain of Carabobo, other regiments of Bolívar's men drive headlong against the men of La Torre, now formed into squares, bitterly contesting every inch of ground.

"Viva España!" "Viva Colombia!" "Viva el Rey Fernando Séptimo!" "Viva la Libertad!" Furiously men shout these phrases as they close in death-grips.

Cedeño, he who had joked with Plaza at breakfast, rides full-tilt into a square of Spanish infantry, and falls dead across his horse, shot and bayoneted in a dozen places. Plaza, he who laughingly bandied repartee with Cedeño while both gulped their morning coffee, drops lifeless to the ground, blood spurting from half a dozen wounds.

Páez, shouting to his fellow centaurs, leads his squadrons and battalions, now fully recovered from their early setback and elated with the consciousness of triumph, into the forefront of the battle, where groups of gallant Spaniards, formed in hollow squares, obsti-

nately hold their ground. Suddenly, out of the smoke and din, Páez sees a rider galloping madly away, his horse snorting and covered with foam—one of his own riders, apparently running from the Spaniards. The Centaur rides toward him, bars his way, recognizes the man. It is El Negro Primero—Negro Number One—the gigantic ex-slave, the hero of twenty mad charges, the jester who has raised shouts of laughter around a hundred camp-fires.

"What's the matter?" roars Páez. "Do you mean to tell me you're running away? Shame on you! The battle isn't won yet. Go back into the fight, you damned coward, and get yourself killed!"

The big negro reins up his horse until it falls back on its haunches, tears open his coat, shows his breast, red with blood.

"General, I was just looking for you to say good-by. General, I can't go back to get myself killed, because—I'm dead!"

With that he tumbles from his horse, stiffens out on the ground.

Victory! Victory, at last, for Bolívar and Venezuela and the cause of South American Independence! Brave though they are, the soldiers of La Torre and Morales cannot longer stand against the onslaught of their foes. Everywhere their lines are smashed in, their resistance broken.

But even in defeat, they hold high the proud reputation of Spain for bearing valiant soldier-sons. Beset on all sides by victory-maddened infantry and cavalry, ranks thinned by cannon fire, comrades lying dead and

wounded to right and left, the Spanish "Valencey" regiment, the pick of La Torre's army, forming in hollow square, with lowered bayonets and grim-set jaws, falls back slowly, in perfect order, fighting every inch of the way. Against it Bolívar, in the frenzy of triumph, launches his best reserve troops. No use! "Stand firm, Valencey!" In vain Páez and his centaurs charge in fury against the sides of the square. "Firm, Valencey!" commands Colonel Tomás García, the regiment's brave commander. Over rough ground, for mile after mile, with the entire patriot army pounding at front and rear and flanks, Valencey makes good its retreat. Superb in defeat was stiff-necked Spain at Carabobo.

Around the camp-fires the victors swap stories of their deeds in the battle, extol to the skies the heroes of the day—Cedeño, Plaza, Negro Number One. The latter's last words "I am dead!" are bandied from lip to lip—never to be forgotten in Venezuela. Men who saw the giant ex-slave before and during the battle hasten to add other stories of his last day among the living.

They tell how he went from comrade to comrade, his eyes shining as if with some sort of occult inspiration, exclaiming: "Remember now! If you fights well today you is goin' to Heaven, but if you don't you is goin' to hell!" They remember how this most valiant of lance-fighters had actually been racing with Cedeño, when the latter was riding to throw himself against the solid squares of Spaniards and there meet his death, and, keeping the lead over that reckless officer by dint of the maddest galloping, had called back to him over his shoulder:

"Hey there! Nothin' gets in front of me today but the neck of my horse!"

With the remnants of his army, La Torre, abandoning Valencia, shuts himself up behind the ramparts of Puerto Cabello—that fortress which so often before had proved a welcome refuge alike for Spaniard and republican. After more than three centuries, the battle of Carabobo has rung the knell of Spanish domination over Venezuela. There is none now to dispute Simon Bolívar's claim to having earned the title of Liberator. After dire hardships, after galling defeat, after years of exile, after sacrificing position and wealth and, again and again, risking his very life, he has given Venezuela a place among the free nations of the world.

A month after his victory at Carabobo, he enters Carácas, Venezuela's capital, his birthplace. His welcome from his fellow Caraqueños is madness, frenzy, delirium. In surging, cheering mobs they follow him to his house, they press into it, into the room where he is seeking quiet—they jostle him, embrace him, shake his hand, pluck at his garments. "Viva el Libertador!"

But there is still much and serious work to be done. Venezuela is free, so is New Granada, but Quito is not. Neither is Peru. Carabobo and Boyacá are only a beginning!

In a few days Bolívar is on the move again—toward Bogotá and the lands farther to the south.

On the way he passes his great plantation of San Mateo, where he played and laughed as a child, where he spent the golden days of his honeymoon with gentle

Maria Teresa nearly a score of years before, where, behind flimsy defenses, fighting with fanatical valor, he and his soldiers broke the onslaughts of bloody Boves.

San Mateo is a desert. Its buildings—in one of which heroic Ricaurte met a hero's death—are charred ruins. Of a thousand slaves who, a few years before, clustered about, awaiting the commands of their young master, only three remain, dragging out a furtive existence in a hovel, amid all this desolation. Bolívar summons them to his presence.

"From this moment you are free!" he tells them. With tears of gratitude they fall at his feet; sobbing with joy, they catch at the outstretched hand of the Liberator.

Chapter XIV

SOUTHWARD HO!

BOLÍVAR is now one of the busiest of men. On every side military and civil affairs claim his attention; at every moment the countries which he is bringing into being need his guidance; at all hours of the day and night there are decisions to be made, emergencies to be met, unruly colleagues to be placated.

His active brain seems never to rest. His frail physique is subjected constantly to the rudest of tests, until again and again it looks as if—in the words of the English governor who had known and admired him in Jamaica—"the flame must consume the oil."

For hours on end he strides up and down his headquarters, dictating letters to his secretaries, listening to petitions, making crisp comments.

A secretary reads to him a request from a priest for some favor or other.

"What has he done heretofore?" snaps Bolívar.

"He was a friend of the Spaniards."

"Well, tell him to address his petition to the King of Spain!"

They read him a letter from a man who, when Bogotá was in disorder, broke into some shops and made off with a lot of merchandise. Now he is asking for a government position.

"Tell him to be satisfied with what he stole!"

Then comes the plea of a New Granadan officer for back pay—covering a period when the New Granadans were letting themselves be defeated by the Spaniards. "Take down this!" the Liberator orders his secretary—and forthwith he dictates:

"There are not funds enough in the treasury to meet the claims of those who freed New Granada, much less to cover the back pay of those who let the enemy enslave it!"

All the while he complains of the slowness of his amanuenses, of the mistakes they allow to creep into the letters which he dictates in dozens and at top speed.

"I cannot find anyone to write for me!" he wails to a friend, "and I cannot do it myself. Every three days I have to get a new amanuensis and every time I make a change I fall into a rage. At times I feel tempted to publish my troubles in the Official Gazette, so people to whom I owe letters may know the cause of my silence!"

None was closer to Bolívar in these busy days than O'Leary, his Irish aide-de-camp, and none has left a better picture of what manner of man the Liberator was at the time when, having freed Venezuela and New Granada, he was bent on bringing freedom to Quito and Peru.

"Bolívar's forehead was high, but not very wide, and it was seamed with wrinkles from his early years—a sign that he was a thinker," O'Leary tells us. "His eyelashes were thick and well-shaped. His eyes were black, bright and penetrating, his nose long and perfect in shape; on it was a small wen which annoyed him very

much until, finally, around 1820, it disappeared, leaving an almost imperceptible trace. His cheek-bones were pronounced, his cheeks sunken from the time that I first knew him in 1818; his mouth was ugly, with rather thick lips; the distance between his nose and mouth was quite noticeably large. His teeth were white, uniform and beautiful; of them he took the greatest care. His ears were large but well-placed, his hair black, of fine texture and curly. He wore it long between 1818 and 1821, when he began to grow gray, after which he had his hair cut short. He had whiskers and a moustache light in hue and did not shave them until he was at Potosí in 1825.

"He was 5 feet 6 inches tall (English measure). His chest was narrow, his figure slender, his legs particularly thin. His skin was dark and rather coarse, his hands and feet small, well-shaped and such as a woman might envy. His expression, when he was in a good humor, was pleasant, but it became terrible when he was aroused—the change in him, in fact, was unbelievable.

"Bolívar always had a good appetite but none equaled him in the capacity to endure hunger. Though a great lover of the good things of the table and a connoisseur of good cuisine, he found pleasure in eating the simple and primitive dishes of the 'llaneros' and the Indians. He was very temperate. His favorite wines were Graves and champagne; not even at the times, during our acquaintance, when he was drinking most, did I ever see him take more than four glasses of the former or two of the latter. At table he made a point of filling himself the glasses of guests seated beside him.

"He took a great deal of exercise, and never did I know anyone who could endure fatigue like him. After a day's march, sufficient to exhaust the most robust man, I have seen him work five or six hours, or dance as long, with all the enthusiasm which he had for that diversion.

"He slept five or six hours out of the twenty-four —in a hammock, on a cot, on a cattle-hide or wrapped in his cloak on the ground, without a roof over his head —and on all of these occasions his sleep was as good as if he were bedded on soft feathers. He slept lightly and awoke easily. To this alone he owed his life at Rincón de Los Toros. His keenness of vision and fineness of ear were such that not even the plainsmen excelled him in either.

"He was an adept at handling arms and a most dexterous and daring horseman, though he did not look particularly well on horseback. Extremely fond of horses, he personally oversaw the care of them and, both when on a campaign and in a city, he would himself visit the stables several times a day. He dressed with extreme care and was most cleanly of person, taking a bath every day, and, in regions where the climate was hot, as many as three daily.

"He preferred country to city life. He detested drunkards and gamblers, and, even more, intriguers and liars. He was so loyal and gentlemanly that he would not allow others to be discussed unfavorably in his presence. To him friendship was sacred. Trustful to a degree, if once he felt himself deceived or betrayed, he never forgave him who had abused his confidence.

"His generosity was extraordinary. Not only would

he give away whatever he had but he would run into debt to help others. Prodigal with what was his own, he was almost miserly with public funds. Now and then he may have inclined his ear to praise, but flattery angered him.

"He spoke much and well; he had the rare gift of conversation and liked to tell anecdotes about his past. In writing, his style was florid and correct; his speeches and writings are full of daring and original metaphors. His proclamations are models of military eloquence.

"His dispatches are remarkable alike for elegance of style, clearness and terseness. In the orders which he communicated to his lieutenants he never forgot even the most trivial details; everything was calculated and foreseen by him.

"He had the gift of persuading others and inspiring confidence in them, to which qualities are largely due the astounding triumphs achieved by him despite conditions so difficult that a man without his qualities and mettle would have turned back in discouragement. A creative genius, above all else, he was capable of deriving resources from the void. Always great, he was greatest in adversity—defeated, Bolívar was more formidable than victorious, his enemies used to say. Reverses made him rise superior to himself.

"In attending to matters of civil routine, which he never neglected even when on campaigns, he was as skilful and prompt as in all other phases of his life. Swinging himself back and forth in a hammock, or walking up and down with long steps—for his restless nature precluded his assuming an easy posture—with his arms crossed, or with his left hand grasping the lapel of his

coat and the forefinger of his right hand pressed against his upper lip, he would listen to his secretary reading official correspondence and the innumerable petitions and personal letters addressed to him. As the secretary read, Bolívar would indicate his decision regarding the matter in hand—and, as a rule, the decisions thus made were irrevocable. Having listened to his secretary, he would start dictating at once, sometimes to as many as three amanuenses at a time, official dispatches and letters, for he never left a letter unanswered, no matter by how humble a hand it was written. Though he might be interrupted during dictation, I never heard him make a mistake or get confused on resuming the interrupted phrase. When he did not know the person addressed, or the drafter of the petition being answered, he would ask a couple of questions, but this happened seldom for, gifted as he was with a prodigious memory, he not only knew every officer in his army but all the office-holders and persons of note in the land.

"Possessed of profound knowledge of the human heart, he realized instantly for what sort of work each man might serve, and it was only in very rare cases that he turned out to be mistaken.

"He read much, despite the scant time for reading which his busy life allowed him. He wrote little with his own hand—only to members of his family or some intimate friend—but, when he signed what he had dictated, he almost always added a few lines in his own handwriting.

"He spoke and wrote French correctly and Italian pretty well; as for English, he knew only a little, hardly more than enough for understanding what he read in

that language. He was thoroughly versed in the Greek and Latin classics, which he had studied, and he always read them with pleasure, in good French translations.

"Attacks directed against him in the press made the deepest impression on him, and calumny irritated him. Though a man in the public eye for more than twenty years, he was prevented by his sensitive character from overcoming this susceptibility, rare indeed among men in high position. He believed in the sublime mission of the press as a guardian of public morals and a curb on passions and attributed the greatness and lofty moral standard of the English people to the skilful use made in England of the press as a civilizing agent."

While Bolívar was freeing his native land of Venezuela from Spain, he by no means lost sight of his other grandiose object: the liberation of Quito, the third part of the great Republic of Colombia, where Spanish rule was as yet unbroken.

In 1812 the inhabitants of Quito and the important Pacific coast seaport of Guayaquil had revolted against Spain, in common with so many other South Americans, but the revolt had been repressed with ruthless severity by the King of Spain's representatives in the land. So ruthless were their methods, indeed, so complete the setback administered to those dreaming of independence, that ever since that time—while lands to the north and south were flaming with revolt and echoing to the thunder of battle—the territory of Quito had endured, in sullen inactivity, the sway of its Spanish masters.

Bolívar, however, had decided to alter matters. To-

ward the end of 1820 opportunity beckoned. The people of Guayaquil revolted against Spain for the first time since 1812, drove away King Ferdinand's officials and set up a republican government.

Bolívar instantly saw what the uprising at Guayaquil might mean, if properly utilized, to the furtherance of the cause of independence for all South America. At once he decided to dispatch Antonio José Sucre,* the man who, among all his lieutenants, he considered the ablest, to Guayaquil.

Sucre, up to now, had played only lesser rôles in the drama of freeing Colombia, yet, from the moment Bolívar laid eyes on him, he singled him out as a man in a thousand. Like Bolívar himself, Sucre was a Venezuelan, having been born at Cumaná, in eastern Venezuela; like Bolívar and Mariño, he was of excellent family. When Mariño, Bermúdez, and Piar crossed in their open boat from the island of Trinidad to Venezuela in 1813, to second Bolívar's efforts to defeat the Spaniards, Sucre was one of the handful of men who accompanied them. He afterwards was with Bolívar at Angostura; later he was one of the Colombian commissioners who negotiated with Morillo the Treaty of Regularization of the War and the armistice preceding the battle of Carabobo.

"He has the best-organized head in the whole country," said Bolívar.

O'Leary, the Liberator's Irish biographer, and Bolívar were out riding one day when the Irishman said of a man approaching on horseback:

"Who is that chap who rides so badly?"

* Pronounced SOO'-CREH.

"That is a man," answered Bolívar, "whom I have resolved to bring out of obscurity because I am convinced that some day his glory will rival mine."

An excellent prophecy! In the history of northern South America, Sucre's fame is surpassed only by that of Bolívar. Moreover, in the association of the two men, which lasted, through the ups and downs of war and peace, until Sucre's untimely death, they worked together in a harmony and mutual esteem which nothing ever marred. Sucre's letters to his chief breathe not alone respect but affection and understanding; those of Bolívar to Sucre sound, at times, as if Sucre were the only confidant whom the sorely-harassed Liberator could trust in a world alive with false friends and avowed foes. A Damon and Pythias of the New World! —preserving their friendship untarnished amid vicissitudes which, had they inspired ambition in Sucre or jealousy in Bolívar, might easily have wrecked friendship beyond hope of repair.

Now Bolívar saw his chance to test the mettle of which, he felt convinced, Antonio José Sucre was made. He sent him by sea, with 1,000 Colombian troops, to Guayaquil, to help organize resistance there against Spain and promise, in the name of Colombia, further aid to the rebels.

Before Bolívar himself could turn his attention to the south, there was much work to be finished in the north. While Sucre was consolidating his position among the rebels of Guayaquil, his chief, as we have seen, was winning the battle of Carabobo and freeing his native land of Venezuela. After that he turned his attention to civil matters. He again convened the Colom-

bian Congress—not at Angostura this time, which was too far to the east in a land already comprising Venezuela, New Granada and soon to include (Bolívar confidently dreamed) the whole domain of Quito. This time Congress met at Rosario de Cúcuta, on the borders of New Granada and Venezuela.

Despite the new laurels which Bolívar had won at Carabobo, the Colombian Congress still showed itself restive when he sought to impose control upon it. Still it toyed with the idea of making Colombia a federation —Bolívar's bête noire! Still it shook its head dubiously at some of his dreams. "Unpractical!" growled the Congressmen. "Utopian!"

The fiery Caraqueño was not at all pleased with the Congress of his creation; eventually, indeed, he became so annoyed at it, so convinced that its actions boded ill for the new republic, that, hearing some church bells tolling for a funeral, he sarcastically remarked: "Listen! They are tolling for Colombia!"

Once more he decided that his place was the battlefield, not the council chamber. So—having been appointed President again—he obtained from Congress special powers for himself, to last as long as there was war with Spain. Having thus craftily endowed himself with well-nigh despotic authority, he shook the dust of Rosario de Cúcuta from his feet and hurried southward, where there were Spaniards instead of Congressmen to fight.

Again he left Santander in charge at Bogotá. Santander was a snake in the grass, for he had never been a friend of Bolívar, but his influence was great in his native New Granada and it was a case of working with

the instruments at hand. Ever since Santander, together with Castillo, had sought to thwart Bolívar before his invasion of Venezuela back in 1813, things had not gone smoothly in their relations. But it was with Santander as with Páez, as with Mariño and Bermúdez—bold enough in opposition when Bolívar was away, the flashing eyes and firm words of the Liberator invariably cowed him when they met face to face.

At first Bolívar thought of transporting troops by sea to Guayaquil, where Sucre already was, and, aided by that able commander, to march on Quito. But he gave up the idea of the sea journey, because the Spaniards controlled the Pacific coast north of Guayaquil. Instead, he conceived a bolder plan.

Sucre was to advance from Guayaquil, engaging the Spanish forces between that port and Quito, while Bolívar himself, marching southward overland from Bogotá, was to defeat whatever Spanish troops opposed him, and, having done so, was to enter Quito from the north. In short, it was to be a race between him and Sucre to see which should take Quito first.

He set out from Bogotá on December 13, 1821. The difficulties before him were like those of his great march over the Andes. From the city of Popayán southward the region to be traversed was desolate, roadless, wrapped in dripping fog. Precipices thousands of feet deep had to be skirted; cruel underbrush had to be cut away before men could advance; malignant fevers, bred in the fog-soaked ravines, smote down even the hardiest. To make matters even worse, squarely across the path of Bolívar's southward march, lay the city of Pasto, whose inhabitants had from the very outset of the

war for independence shown fanatical loyalty to the King of Spain and implacable hatred toward the cause of freedom.

Perched on a lofty plateau, surrounded by towering mountains, approachable only by narrow paths winding through appalling gorges and across foaming torrents, Pasto, with its thousands of valiant and obdurate royalists, conversant with every inch of the ground around their mountain home, presented an obstacle such as might make the boldest turn back. Undaunted, however, by nature and man, Simon Bolívar pressed onward, deeper and deeper into the cruel mountain land, nearer and nearer to the hornet's nest of Pasto.

He left Popayán on January 26, 1822, with three thousand men. Something like a month later, when he had laboriously toiled to the bank of the brawling Juanambú river, his force was reduced to a scant two thousand—the rest had succumbed to fever, or slipped over precipices, or dropped dead from exhaustion, or deserted, unable to continue the inhuman exertions demanded of them.

On the Juanambú, Bolívar was well within the territory of the Pastusos, as the natives of Pasto were called. Not wishing to try conclusions with them with his shaken forces, he continued his march along the right bank of the river, hoping to get beyond Pasto without a battle with the monarchists inhabiting it. But his march was brought to an abrupt halt when he reached the gorges of the river Guaítara—towering masses of rock, rising sheer above the foaming stream, made progress impossible. Across the stream a Spanish force under Colonel

Basilio García, swelled by hundreds of Pastusos, calmly awaited Bolívar.

He was in a terrible fix. Behind him lay the grim region over which he had come, saturated with fog, foul with fever, certain death to him and all his men if he should attempt to retrace his steps with an enemy in pursuit. In front, behind masses of steep rock, lay García and his Spaniards and the rabid royalists of Pasto, exulting in advance over a victory they deemed assured.

Standing on the edge of the foaming Guaítara, Simon Bolívar looked upward at the rocky heights sheltering his foes.

"A formidable position!" he remarked to the officers around him. "But we can't remain here and we can't retreat! Nothing to do but take it! We must and will conquer!"

It was a case for frontal assault, no matter how bloody the losses might be.

"Advance before lunch!" Bolívar ordered Torres, leader of his vanguard. For some reason Torres mistook the order and told his men to lunch before attacking. Bolívar found them eating. He was furious.

"You are no longer in command here!" he thundered at Torres. That officer, throwing away his sword and seizing a musket, said: "General, if I am not fit to lead this attack as commander let me take part in it as a private!" Bolívar laid his hand on the shoulder of Torres: "You are reinstated!" he told him. "Lead the attack!"

The main Spanish position was at Bomboná, protected not only by nature but by trenches and all sorts of obstacles sown in the path of assailants. Torres and

his men were the first to reach it. Attacking with the fury of desperation, they were almost annihilated by the royalist fire. Vainly they surged against García's trenches; vainly they stumbled and climbed until they were pounding against his main line, grappling hand to hand with his men. The position was too strong—the men of Torres perished by the score at the hands of the soldiers of Spain and their allies from Pasto. Heaps of corpses lay huddled against the face of García's trenches. Torres, himself, was mortally wounded as he led his men.

Meanwhile Valdés, one of the bravest of Bolívar's Venezuelan veterans, was toiling forward against the Spanish right. In places the walls of the gorge through which his men advanced were so steep that they had to make ladders by sticking bayonets in the face of the rock-walls, fastening them in crannies and crevices, and then climbing up over them, hand over hand. Despite such awful difficulties, Valdés succeeded in getting through the gorges, forming his men in line of battle and driving in the Spanish right which sought to oppose him.

It was dark when Bolívar got word of Valdés's success. He now resolved to stake his last card. A single battalion remained to him in reserve—the one called "Vencedores en Boyacá" (Victors of Boyacá), which had turned the tide of battle in the great fight which was the culmination of Bolívar's trans-Andean march. Turning to this battalion, Bolívar shouted, in a voice of thunder: "Men! Your name alone spells victory! Forward!"

It was the last hope. Superbly did the victors of Boy-

acá uphold their proud renown. As they surged forward, a full moon rose over the bloody battlefield, mixing its pale light with the flashes of gunfire. The battalion struck the Spanish lines with an irresistible impact, driving them in, just as Valdés, farther to the right, crushed the last vestige of Spanish resistance to his onslaught.

Sullenly Spaniards and Pastusos retreated. There was no pursuit. Bolívar and his men were only too glad to be in possession of the battlefield; dropping, exhausted, to the ground, they slept amid the corpses of friend and foe, picked out in ghastly distinctness by the wan light of the moon.

Next day García returned to Bolívar the flags he had captured from the heroic battalions of Torres, after their fruitless attack on his lines. With a courtesy worthy of the best traditions of Spain, he sent with them this message: "The survivors of such heroic battalions should not be without their banners!" A welcome change from the tactics of "war to the death" days!

Though shaken and weakened by Bomboná, García was by no means done for. Moreover, the Pastusos, their hatred of the cause of independence inflamed by their encounter with its principal champion, urged the Spanish commander to fresh efforts. Rallying around their leader, Bishop Jiménez de Padilla, these fanatics told García: "All the men of Pasto will help you—and many of the women!"

So García put up a bold front. He refused to acknowledge himself beaten. For some days the two forces, exhausted by the ordeal of Bomboná, watched each other warily. Bolívar took advantage of the lull to send

urgent requests for reinforcements to the Colombian government.

"The Pastusos," he told the Colombian authorities, "are the worst enemies of liberty; in their hatred for us there is no distinction of sex or age or quality."

After waiting in vain for the required help, Bolívar, shunning another attack, fell back to the strong position of El Peñol. García and the Pastusos did not molest him.

There reinforcements, arriving at last, again brought Bolívar's forces up to two thousand. Heartened by this, he boldly summoned García to surrender. The Spaniard might have agreed—Bomboná had shaken him badly—had it not been for the fiery Pastusos.

"Never!" they cried. "Lead us against Bolívar again! We will die fighting for Spain! Viva el Rey!" So García refused to capitulate. In sullen inactivity the two little armies remained facing each other.

Meanwhile, what of Sucre?

Soon after his arrival at Guayaquil, he had found himself in difficulties. At the Pacific seaport there were three parties, at loggerheads with each other. One wanted union with Peru and was already dealing with an envoy sent from that land by San Martín, the Argentine Liberator, who had marched his troops into Peruvian territory after liberating Chile. A second party wanted to erect Guayaquil into a republic free alike of Spain across the water, Peru in the south, and Colombia in the north. A third wanted union with Colombia.

Naturally, Sucre favored this third party, seeing that he was in Guayaquil representing Simon Bolívar, Presi-

dent of Colombia, but he decided that the time was not ripe for pressing Colombian claims. First the Spaniards must be driven away. Already Aymerich, the Spanish Captain-General, was advancing from Quito, in the hope of dislodging the republicans of Guayaquil and subjugating that seaport anew.

Sucre marched out to meet Aymerich with a combined force of Colombians and men of Guayaquil. The Spaniard had imprudently divided his forces into two columns, little knowing what manner of opponent he had in Sucre. The latter, falling upon the main Spanish force at Yaguachi, gave it such a beating that the other column fell back toward Quito, unwilling to try conclusions with the crafty Venezuelan. But Aymerich soon got his revenge by administering a severe check to Sucre, when he sought to capitalize his victory. Honors were even.

Aymerich, however, was not in the same class with Sucre. Pulling his troops together at Guayaquil, the Venezuelan again marched toward Quito. Again the sufferings of the trans-Andean march confronted his men —freezing páramos, forests well-nigh untrodden by the foot of man, scanty food, disease lurking everywhere. Many soldiers died, many more fell ill or deserted. But Sucre, undaunted, pushed on, until he effected a junction with the Peruvian General Santa Cruz, sent by San Martín with reinforcements. This brought his army up to two thousand men, a total soon swelled by recruits coming in from the countryside, the inhabitants of which had been fired to patriotic ardor by the determined advance.

On April 19, 1822—while Bolívar, having won his Pyrrhic victory at Bomboná, was waiting at El Peñol,

reluctant to try conclusions again with Basilio García and the Pastusos—Sucre beat a Spanish force at Riobamba and, following up his advantage with astonishing celerity and skill, turned a strong enemy position by marching his men over the barren slopes of the great Cotopaxi volcano. There was nothing for the Spaniards to do but trail after Sucre—the crafty Venezuelan had robbed them of the initiative, just as Bolívar had done with Barreiro before Pantano de Vargas and Boyacá.

On May 16 Sucre was only ten miles from Quito. A week later, executing another audacious turning movement, he marched his soldiers—with rain drenching them to the skin and underbrush cutting their half-frozen, half-naked limbs—over the slopes of another great volcano, that of Pichincha. Deploying them on the vast, high plateau crowned by the volcano, he offered to their gaze the whole city of Quito, spread out, white and glittering, in its beautiful valley, thousands of feet below. But there was little time for the contemplation of scenery. Aymerich and his Spaniards, furious at having been outflanked again, were resolutely climbing the sides of the volcano, bent on coming to grips with their daring foe.

The two armies clashed thousands of feet above sea level, amid snow-capped peaks and smoking volcanoes, with Quito, the contested prize, in plain sight of patriot and Spaniard. It was a short fight and a furious one, in which hundreds of brave men bit the dust; in which first Aymerich and then Sucre glimpsed victory, seemed to taste defeat, then, amid the huzzas of charging squadrons, saw the light of victory glow again.

After the first clashes, it certainly looked like the

Spaniard's day; everywhere Aymerich's men drove before them the soldiers of Sucre, shaken and short of ammunition.

But Sucre was of tough fiber, and tough was the fiber of those with him. With all seemingly lost, he flung into the line three companies of the "Albion" battalion, formed from the British heroes of Pantano de Vargas and Boyacá.

They struck the foe with their accustomed fury. They crashed through the Spanish lines. In vain the Spanish Captain-General sought to rally his men. Too late! Córdova, a New Granadan leader of the most reckless courage, drove home a charge of his men in aid of the Britons, and they, too, smashed the Spanish resistance.

Aymerich was done for—Sucre had won a victory destined to be surpassed by only one other in his brilliant career. In full flight the Spaniards tumbled into Quito, with Córdova's men at their very heels.

Next day Aymerich threw up the sponge. He sent a flag of truce to Sucre. After a parley, he agreed to surrender not only the city of Quito but the whole territory of the same name over which he had ruled in the name of Ferdinand VII.

Sucre entered Quito in triumph. One hundred and sixty Spanish officers and eleven hundred men became his prisoners. A number of cannon and huge quantities of munitions and equipment also fell to him. In addition to these losses, the Spaniards had to mourn six hundred killed and wounded in the bloody affray on the slopes of the great volcano.

Many miles to the northward, stalemated by García

and the Pastusos, Bolívar heard the news of Pichincha and of Sucre's triumphal entry into Quito. So did García. Realizing the futility of further opposition, the Spaniard agreed to surrender to the Liberator.

The Pastusos, however, remained obdurate. Their city was in an uproar at García's action; its fanatic royalists were all for fighting to the last ditch. Wiser counsels prevailed, however. Bolívar and García rode into Pasto together. The fiery bishop, Jiménez de Padilla, advised accepting the inevitable. Scowling, hoping for better luck in future, the Pastusos bowed their obstinate heads. Simon Bolívar had by no means heard the last of them!

On June 16—three weeks after Sucre had entered Quito—Bolívar made his triumphal entry into the city.

Thus ended Spanish rule in the domain of Quito, where the King of Spain had been supreme since the sixteenth century. Quito was no longer a part of the great republic of Colombia on paper only—thanks, mainly, to the military prowess of Bolívar's ablest lieutenant. Colombia now stretched, unbroken, all the way from the easternmost tip of Venezuela, opposite the British isle of Trinidad, to Guayaquil, from the Isthmus of Panama to the great volcanoes and plateaus on the confines of Brazil and what is now Ecuador. And over all this vast region Simon Bolívar was Supreme Dictator.

Yet he was not satisfied. First, Guayaquil must be securely tied to Colombia. Then—restlessly his eyes roved southward, still farther southward. Covetously they fixed themselves upon rich Peru, still bristling with Spanish bayonets, still crowned, in defiance of Bolívar

and San Martín alike, by the red-and-yellow flags of King Ferdinand.

Bolívar had to his credit achievements such as had fallen to the lot of few men in history. He had brought liberty to his native land and to two other countries besides. Not enough!

Simon Bolívar is becoming dazzled by the brightness of the destiny beckoning him. The fantastic side of his nature again and again comes uppermost. It tints his dreams with rainbow hues, lifts him into moments of rapt exaltation, imparts to his words an uncanny something. To many this seems sheer madness; to a few, though, it is the very essence of inspiration.

As he journeys southward, through the beautiful uplands of Quito, ringed around by superb mountains which tower above him thousands upon thousands of feet until their snow-capped pinnacles seem to pierce through the clouds to the very skies, he gives rein to his fantasies, and into his eyes comes the strange light that tends, more and more, to illumine them since he has begun to dictate orders and win battles and conquer entire countries. He lifts his gaze to the vast mass of the Chimborazo, South America's greatest volcano—straightway he lusts to climb it, to tread its snow-covered slopes, to contemplate the superb panorama of mountain and plain which it proffers to those who dare toil to its topmost peak.

Simon Bolívar climbs Chimborazo. On the summit he sinks down, exhausted, and, in his exhaustion, he closes his eyes and a strange dream comes to him. So vivid is it that, awakening, he can scarce believe it to

have been a dream. After descending the slopes of the mighty volcano, he snatches up a pen and jots down his dream, his delirium, whatever one should call it:

"I came, wrapped in the mantle of the dawn, from where the mighty Orinoco pays its tribute to the god of the waters. I had visited the enchanted springs of the Amazon and I wished to climb the watch-tower of the world. I sought the footsteps of La Condamine, of Humboldt; boldly I followed them; nothing could hold me back.

"I reached the glacial regions, where the air was so thin that I could scarcely breathe. Never before had human foot trodden the diamond crown placed by the Eternal Father on the lofty brow of the King of the Andes. 'Wrapped in this mantle,' I exclaimed, 'which has served as my banner, I have traversed the infernal regions, crossed rivers and seas, climbed the shoulders of the Andes. Under the feet of Colombia, the Earth has flattened itself, and Time himself has been unable to check the march of Liberty. The goddess of war has been humbled by the light of dawn—wherefore, then, should I not be able to trample upon the white hairs of Chimborazo, giant of the earth? Wherefore not? I will!"

"Impelled by a spirit of violence hitherto unknown to me, that appeared to me divine, I left behind the footsteps of Humboldt and set out to climb beyond the eternal belt of cloud shrouding Chimborazo. As if driven forward by this unknown spirit within me, I reached the summit, and, as I touched with my head the pinnacle of the firmament and saw at my feet a yawning abyss, I fell in a swoon.

"Feverish delirium engulfed my mind, I felt as if inflamed by strange, supernatural fire. The God of Colombia had taken possession of me.

"Suddenly Time stood before me—in the shape of a venerable old man, bearing the weight of all the centuries, frowning, bent, bald, wrinkled, a scythe in his hand.

" 'I am the Father of the Centuries! I am the Guardian of fame and the secrets of life. My Mother was Eternity; the limits of my Empire are the Infinite. For me there is no tomb, because I am more powerful than Death. I gaze upon the Past, the Future, and through my hands goes the Present. Why think vain thoughts, you of the human race, whether you be young or old, sunk in obscurity or cast in heroic mold?

" 'Think you that this universe of yours is anything, that to fight your way to eminence on an atom of creation is to raise yourselves? Think you that the infinitesimal moments you call centuries can serve for measuring my secrets? Think you that holy truth has been vouchsafed to you? Think you, in your madness, that your actions have any value in my eyes? All about you is less than a dot in presence of the Infinite, who is my brother!'

"Filled with terror, I replied: 'Surely, oh Time! the miserable mortal who has climbed thus high must perish! All men have I surpassed in good fortune, for I have raised myself above all. The earth lies at my feet; I touch Eternity; beneath me I feel the throbbing of Hell; beside me I contemplate radiant planets, suns of infinite dimensions. I gaze upon the realms of space which inclose matter; I decipher, on your brow, the history of the past and the thoughts of Destiny.'

" 'Man!' spake Time to me. 'Observe! Learn! Preserve before your mind what you have seen, trace for your fellow men the picture of the physical universe, of the moral universe. Hide not the secrets which Heaven has revealed to you! Speak the Truth to mankind!'

"The phantom disappeared. Speechless, stupefied, unconscious, I lay for a long time stretched out upon the enormous diamond which served me for a couch. Finally, the ringing voice of Colombia summoned me. I returned to life! Rising to my feet, I opened with my fingers my heavy eyelids, became a man once more, wrote down what I had heard and seen in my Delirium!"

Such wild imaginings,* however, do not keep Bolívar from sweeping the universe of reality with piercing eyes and applying to practical problems practical methods of solution.

Beyond Quito lies Peru, where Spanish armies are to be faced and despotism to be crushed.

Onward, then, to Peru! Onward!—Southward!—to liberate a land as large as all three of those to which he has already brought freedom!

* There are doubts as to whether Bolívar ascended Chimborazo or wrote the "Delirium." Yet both the ascent and the fantastic piece of writing seem characteristic of the man.

Chapter XV

SAN MARTÍN AND PERU

AT Guayaquil, the Pacific seaport of Quito, which was administered by a revolutionary junta, Sucre had continued to do preliminary work toward having the city and its district join the Republic of Colombia, as part of the old Spanish territory of Quito. Bolívar now proceeded there in order to put the finishing touches to this work. The citizens of Guayaquil desiring union with Peru and those who wanted an independent republic were overruled. Bolívar saw to it that "La Gran Colombia," the triple republic of his creation, should be rounded off with this important outlet on the Pacific Ocean.

Meanwhile, farther south, San Martín, Liberator of Argentina and Chile, who had marched into Peru after freeing those countries and established himself at Lima, the Peruvian capital, became imbued with a desire to meet and talk with Bolívar, his fellow liberator.

Things were not going well with San Martín in Lima. Not only was the interior of the country still held by the Spaniards in considerable strength but there was dissension between the Peruvians, on the one hand, and the officials and troops whom the great Argentine had brought with him from the south. It would be well, he bethought him, to enlist the aid of Bolívar before essay-

ing to drive the Spaniards from Peru and restore order in the government of that land.

So he took ship for Guayaquil, under the impression that Bolívar was already at that place, but was forced to return empty-handed, because the Venezuelan had not yet reached Guayaquil from Quito. A second journey northward by San Martín was more successful. Bolívar, who had reached Guayaquil shortly before, was suddenly apprised that a ship, with the Argentine leader aboard, had been sighted off the harbor. He hastened to prepare a reception for the Liberator of the South and sent him a cordial message of welcome.

San Martín, landing soon after, was embraced by Bolívar and led, amid the acclamations of the Guayaquileños, to the Venezuelan's headquarters. There they held several long conversations.

Nobody was present at any of these except the two participants. Nobody, to this day, has found out exactly what happened. At the end of a day and a half, San Martín, escorted to the water-front by Bolívar, embarked again for Peru. Never again were the two Liberators to meet.

Three matters, apparently, came up for discussion at these conferences, which for over a century have provided historians of South America with unfailing material for hypothesis and conjecture.

First, San Martín, having marched northward from Chile into Peru, and installed himself in the latter land at the head of its government, desired to see Guayaquil become a part of Peru. He was too late, however, to achieve this. Sucre and Bolívar had worked al-

together too diligently toward annexing Guayaquil to Colombia. When San Martín arrived nothing was lacking but the vote of the Guayaquil Assembly and it was already a foregone conclusion that this vote would be as Bolívar desired. San Martín realized this and desisted from pressing the Peruvian claim to Guayaquil.

Second, he favored the establishment in Peru of a monarchical form of government. His idea was to have there some prince, belonging to one of the European royal families, as king. Having broached this project to Bolívar, he encountered emphatic opposition. The Liberator of Colombia had no use for kings in Peru or any other part of the New World, and he told San Martín so without mincing words.

Then the two took up the most important matter of all: the question of whether Bolívar and his Colombian troops were to aid San Martín in the liberation of Peru from the Spaniards.

The Argentine commander first proposed that Bolívar should instruct the Colombian army to march into Peru in order that, under San Martín's orders, it should proceed to combat the forces of Spain. This Bolívar refused to countenance. The way he put his refusal was that he could not obtain from the Colombian Congress permission for thus employing the troops.

San Martín then offered to place himself under Bolívar's orders, if the latter would lead the Colombians southward. To this Bolívar also demurred, pointing out politely that he could not possibly allow the great Argentine patriot thus to subordinate himself.

By this time it was clear to San Martín that, if Bolívar

was to aid in the liberation of Peru, he had made up his mind to do so solely on his own terms. Behind his polite words loomed a rigid determination not to permit San Martín to have a share in the liberation.

The Argentine leader might have insisted. After all, he was master at Lima, he had an army there, by energetic action he might drive away the Spaniards unaided and thus add the title of Liberator of Peru to the proud title already possessed by him—Liberator of Argentine and Chile. By freeing a third South American country, he might take rank with him who had freed Venezuela, New Granada and Quito.

But San Martín had had his fill of the dissensions in Lima. He was anxious to return home, give up his leadership there and depart for Europe, to end his life in repose. He, who had fought in early youth in the Spanish armies opposing Napoleon, who had devoted years to the service of his country and Chile, was weary. "I gave my youth to Spain and my middle age to my country," he once exclaimed. "Now I wish to dispose as I please of my old age!"

Confronted with the fiery energy and ambition of Bolívar, the hero of the South gave up the game.

Forty hours after he had reached Guayaquil he was sailing away southward. To officers clustered around him on the vessel bearing him toward Peru he remarked bitterly that Bolívar had got the better of him.

"Bolívar is not the man we thought him," he added.

Arriving at Lima, he promptly told the Peruvians that he had resolved to leave their country. Soon after he was on his way to Chile. Impatiently shaking off the yoke of politics there he voluntarily exiled himself to

General José de San Martín, Liberator of Argentina and Chile

France, where he lived until his death—in 1850—a full twenty-eight years after the historic Guayaquil interview.

That interview has brought much censure upon the head of Simon Bolívar. Argentine and other historians, though usually acknowledging that he got the better of San Martín, taunt him with having shown himself unscrupulously ambitious and selfish, willing to sacrifice Peru to Spain rather than share with San Martín the glory of bringing to the Peruvians freedom from the Spanish yoke.

That Bolívar risked much in declining coöperation with San Martín is beyond question; his justification, as in other acts of his, must be sought in subsequent events.

Looking into the future, he seems to have felt that the presence of the other might be a hindrance rather than an advantage, and—realizing that he could outmaneuver San Martín—he daringly resolved to do so and stake everything on his lucky star.

The clearest proofs of Simon Bolívar's genius are sometimes to be found in the results of his most questionable acts. Endowed with a positively uncanny prescience, with a vision which, focused on the future, seemed actually to pierce the mists shrouding it, he was prone to be indifferent to the means employed to achieve his ends. He saw the goal; if being scrupulously fair jeopardized attaining it, then away with scrupulous fairness! Had he failed, had his dreams proved empty, this tendency would have greatly lessened his claim to greatness. But since he kept turning dreams, even the maddest, into realities, his shortcomings in this respect must at least be looked upon with a lenient eye.

His main ambition, after all, was to liberate his native land and as much more of South America as possible; if his methods were not always of the best, the loftiness of the end and the superhuman energy expended upon achieving it must be rated as attenuating circumstances.

Had he failed to free Peru, his attitude toward San Martín at Guayaquil would have been a damning thing against him. Since he succeeded, criticism must needs lose much of its force. At Copenhagen, Nelson, when told that the signal ordering him to withdraw was flying from the mast of his commander's ship, placed his spyglass to his blind eye and coolly remarked: "I see no signal!" Then he sailed in and won the battle. Not a word of censure met him when he reappeared, victorious, before his chief. But, had he been defeated . . . !

So it was with Bolívar after snubbing San Martín at Guayaquil.

Audacious the move was—unscrupulous, perhaps—but, when all is said and done, the book of history flies open before one's eyes, forcing one to admit: "Well, Bolívar *did* free Peru!"

Also, did not the outcome of their interview prove Bolívar the more dominant of the two men? The great Argentine leader need not have knuckled down to his rival. Had he been convinced that, in so doing, he was jeopardizing the cause of Peruvian freedom, his bowing to Bolívar's will would have been most reprehensible. But he was convinced of nothing of the sort. Great as was his disapproval of Bolívar's tactics, of the Venezuelan's desire to get the whole credit for liberating Peru—a disapproval expressed by San Martín in later

life—he seems to have been quite sure that his rival from the north was quite capable of liberating the country. In allowing the Venezuelan a clear field, the victor of Chacabuco and Maipó gave no hint that he felt he was leaving Peru to an unhappy fate; instead, he seems to have been assured that it would soon be as much an independent nation as Venezuela, New Granada and Quito, already freed by Bolívar, as Argentina and Chile, already freed by himself.

With head held high and glory undimmed, José de San Martín departed from Peru, leaving her liberation to Simon Bolívar. Nor did the restless Venezuelan delay long in putting his plans for freeing her into execution.

On September 1, 1822, he started on his southward march from Guayaquil to Peru, dreaming eagerly of the dazzling glory, which, he felt sure, was to be won there by Simon Bolívar the Soldier and Simon Bolívar the Statesman.

In the triple republic of his creation things were looking up. Early in 1822, the United States had recognized the independence of Colombia. From Europe came hints that his achievements had found an echo there, that his name was known, his exploits closely followed, recognition a probability. So it was with lofty hopes and strengthened confidence that he turned his face southward.

But he reckoned without the Pastusos!

Hardly was he under way than news reached him that Pasto, that hornet's nest of monarchism perched amid its circle of mountain peaks, was in a turmoil again. Led by one Benito Boves—said to be a nephew of

José Tomás Boves, the Attila of Venezuela—the Pastusos had once more declared for Ferdinand VII.

To march toward Peru with these fanatics astride his line of communications with Bogotá and Carácas would have been rank temerity in Bolívar. So, postponing his expedition to the south, he sent the redoubtable Sucre to have it out with the Pastusos—who had already defeated Obando, left by Bolívar in charge of their district.

So furious was the valor aroused in them at finding themselves once more in arms for the king across the water, that now they actually repulsed Sucre!—victor of Yaguachi and Pichincha!—when he attacked them south of their mountain lair. So rudely handled was Bolívar's lieutenant that he had to fall back for reinforcements. Great was the rejoicing among the Pastusos, unbridled the glee of Benito Boves, fervent the orations of thanksgiving poured out by his fanatical followers in their churches.

Soon Sucre, rested and reinforced, again fell on them. This time battle was joined in the very suburbs of their city. They fought with their usual fury, charging or countering charges with unshakable courage. They fought beneath the shadow of improvised altars to Santiago (St. James) the patron saint of Spain, hastily erected amid their lines, before which disheveled priests, in wild harangues, crucifixes lifted over their heads, besought their parishioners—now transformed into madmen armed to the teeth—to do their duty by their king and drive headlong before them the impious rebels against his sway.

Furiously the Pastusos fought, furiously their priests

urged them to greater courage, furiously Benito Boves and his lieutenants sought to thwart the advance of Sucre. In vain—this time Bolívar's right-hand man was too much for them. Pell-mell he drove them through the suburbs of Pasto, into the heart of the city. As they fell back, they shook their fists in fury at the image of Spain's patron saint, which they had put up for their protection; angrily they tore down his altars and flung them into the dust. For had not Santiago deceived them, proved himself ungrateful, after all the piety and prayers lavished upon him? Sucre's men, as they chased the vanquished Pastusos, trampled underfoot the broken images of the saint and the débris of his shrines.

After a pause for rest, Sucre formed his men for the final assault on the heart of Pasto. But the Pastusos had lost hope of winning; as their foes advanced cautiously toward the main plaza, they found only a few monks and old men and women. Benito Boves and his fighters had taken to the hills.

Coming up from Guayaquil, Bolívar joined Sucre in pacifying Pasto. He levied on it a heavy indemnity, pressed hundreds of Pastusos into the ranks of his army, confiscated the property of many of the more ardent royalists among them, expelled many fanatical priests. Jiménez de Padilla, the militant bishop, who had fled to Popayán, wrote asking for a safe-conduct to take him to Spain. "But, if you go to Spain, you will be abandoning your flock," urged Bolívar: "Your duty is to stay among them." Realizing the correctness of this view, the fiery prelate gave up his plan, and, having made his peace with Bolívar, resumed his duties. Nor did he give any more trouble to the Republic of Colombia.

Then the Liberator turned his eyes toward Peru again. But—again the Pastusos arose to thwart his plans!

In the summer of 1823 they once more proclaimed Ferdinand VII lawful king of the land. Rallying around an Indian chieftain, Agualongo, they drove away the garrison left by Bolívar and actually laid plans to capture Quito, south of their own city.

Exasperated, realizing that Pasto must be crushed before Peru could be liberated, Bolívar once more turned reluctant steps northward.

At Ibarra, between Quito and Pasto, he met Agualongo and his battalions of fanatics. Again they fought desperately for Ferdinand; it cost Bolívar many men and enormous efforts to dislodge and rout them.

Again he occupied Pasto, again he meted out severe punishments on its rebellious inhabitants. Yet nothing could break the obdurate loyalty of the Pastusos to Spain. Sent in batches, under guard, to the south, many refused to taste food, until, overcome by exhaustion, they died by the roadside. Others, reaching Guayaquil, ran from their guards to fling themselves into the river Guayas and perish there; still others, having been hustled aboard vessels bound for Peru, mutinied against their captors, and found death either in bloody fighting on the decks or before firing squads after recapture—exclaiming, with their last breaths: "Viva Fernando Séptimo!"

Nowhere, in all his vast dominions, did any king of Spain have more loyal subjects than the Pastusos. Down to our very day, after more than half a century as citizens of independent Colombia, after more than half a century from the day that the last Spanish soldier had

been driven from South American shores, it was a custom in Pasto for men to rise and call for a toast to "Our liege lord, the King of Spain!"

The Pastusos were not alone in piling up obstacles in the way of Bolívar's march to Peru. While he was engaged in downing them he had heard from Venezuela that the indefatigable Morales, sallying forth from Puerto Cabello, the last Spanish stronghold in the land, had captured Maracaibo and was menacing Cúcuta and even Bogotá. Disregarding insistent requests from Peruvian rebels against Spain that he come to their aid, Bolívar was about to go northward to meet Morales when reports told him that the Spaniard had been worsted and was in full retreat toward Puerta Cabello.

Another disquieting report reaching him from his native Venezuela was to the effect that the Colombian Congress, out of hand again and emboldened by his continued absence, contemplated changing the Constitution adopted at Cúcuta so as to bring back the federation of Miranda's day. Bolívar was as averse as ever to the federal idea. He wrote two letters—one to the Congress, one to Santander, whom he suspected of intriguing behind his back—the gist of which, expressed in firm and indignant language, was "Hands off the Constitution! Not a word about Federation!" Far though he was from the Congressmen and the man in charge at Bogotá, the flash of Simon Bolívar's eyes could be seen, the thunder of his voice heard, behind the written words. Congress ceased to tamper with the Constitution of Cúcuta; Santander ceased flirting with the friends of federation.

And now, at last, the road to Peru lay open before the Liberator!

Bolívar, as has been narrated, had originally started for Peru on September 1, 1822, but had been compelled to postpone his southward march on account of the Pastusos. Then, and later, many of the Peruvians had been inclined to show themselves lukewarm to his interfering in their affairs—despite the fact that neither single-handed nor with the help of San Martín had they been able to drive away their Spanish overlords.

In January, 1823, while Bolívar was at Quito, after having put down the first rebellion of the Pastusos, he learned that San Martín had shaken the dust of Peru from his feet and returned to Chile and the Argentine, leaving the Peruvians to shift for themselves. Still, however, there was reluctance in Peru to get under obligations to Bolívar. An offer from him to help free the country was firmly declined, and the Peruvian government, set up at Lima in defiance of Spain, ordered some Colombian troops already in Peru to return to the north.

Peruvian self-sufficiency, however, had short shrift. The forces of the Peruvian government were severely defeated by the Spaniards in two encounters and the government itself brought, as a result of these setbacks, to a desperate plight. It looked as if Spain would reconquer all Peru; indeed, so serious was the situation that Bolívar, in Guayaquil, began collecting forces lest the Spaniards, rendered arrogant by success, should march northward toward Quito, in an endeavor to reëstablish royal authority in that region.

Peru, at this time, was governed by a triumvirate—General La Mar (the real power), Felipe Alvarado and the Count of Vista Florida. The reverses at the hands of the Spaniards put the trio in very bad odor. The Peruvian army, taking up a threatening position just outside Lima, finally forced the triumvirate to resign and appoint, as President, José de la Riva Agüero, who lost no time in beseeching Bolívar, in the most urgent terms, to come to the aid of Peruvian freedom. But the Liberator—worried at this time by the news of the southward march of Morales from Puerto Cabello—had decided to meet the new menace in the north. However, he sent his ablest general, Sucre, to Lima.

Morales having proved a flash in the pan and Peru growing ever more insistent, Bolívar inclined a willing ear to Peruvian pleadings. But he could not march southward, he averred, until he was authorized to do so by the Colombian Congress.

Chaos seized Peru in its grip. Canterac, the French adventurer who commanded the Spanish forces—he had come to South America with Morillo's expedition—marched on Lima with eight thousand men. Powerless to resist, Riva Agüero and his government fled to the port of Callao, Sucre with them. At Callao, Sucre, with true military ruthlessness, ordered Riva Agüero and his quarrelsome Congress to get out. They went to Trujillo, there to continue their fruitless bickerings. Sucre, meanwhile, organized Callao for defense.

Canterac paraded his army before the defenses of Callao but, overawed by Sucre's resolute front, he decided not to risk an attack. Instead he returned to Lima, levied half a million pesos on the inhabitants, seized a

lot of valuable church plate, and made off into the interior, whence he had descended on the capital and its seaport. Relieved of the threat from Canterac's army, Sucre embarked with three thousand men to operate against the Spaniards in southern Peru. But the Peruvian general Santa Cruz, with whom he intended to cooperate, arrogantly declined his aid, and venturing, on his own, against the Spanish generals Valdés and Olañeta, stupidly allowed them to join forces against him and force him back toward the coast. On his retreat his army crumbled away; of five thousand only a small percentage reached the coast.

Sucre was disgusted. His letters to Bolívar speak eloquently of his disillusionment and wonder at Santa Cruz's tactics, especially at the inexplicable way he had allowed Valdés and Olañeta to combine against him.

However, there was no use crying over spilt milk. The campaign in southern Peru was a failure beyond redemption. Sucre reëmbarked his troops and returned to Callao.

On June 5, 1823, the Colombian Congress at last gave Bolívar permission to march with his Colombian troops into Peru; but the second revolt of the Pastusos, which cut communications between Quito and New Granada, prevented the Liberator from receiving this permission until after he had routed the Pastusos at Ibarra and broken the back of their revolt. Armed now with the long-awaited congressional authorization, Bolívar finally left Guayaquil by sea for Peru on August 7, 1823.

Arriving at Callao, he found things plunged in hopeless chaos. There was one president, Riva Agüero, at

Trujillo, issuing decrees and fulminating against a second President, Torre Tagle, who, at Lima with the Peruvian Congress, was as voluble and impotent as his Trujillo colleague.

Bolívar entered Lima, amid immense popular enthusiasm. The Peruvian Congress at once invested him with complete civil and military powers. Indeed the dictatorial authority given him was such as to make him the supreme arbiter of Peruvian destinies—that is, in the portion of the land controlled by the rebels.

Riva Agüero, from his lair at Trujillo, inveighed furiously against Bolívar's assumption of power, but there was no force behind his fulminations. Bolívar made short work of him. Troops acting under his orders penetrated to Trujillo and arrested the "President," who was exiled to Europe.

Having thus restored a semblance of order, Bolívar, aided by the faithful Sucre, took steps to put the combined Colombian and Peruvian troops on something like a war footing. Their forces totaled barely nine thousand, of which four thousand were disaffected, ill-disciplined Peruvians. All around was a population lukewarm toward liberty. The Spaniards, on the other hand, led by the Viceroy La Serna and Canterac, controlled practically all the country except Lima, Trujillo, Callao and a strip of coast. They totaled some eighteen thousand men and their leaders were confident that they would soon be able to throw the bulk of these against the interlopers from the north and crush them in hopeless defeat.

Bolívar was almost in despair; his courage threatened to fail him as he took stock of the task before him.

"When difficulties are worsted in one direction they increase in another," he lamented.

As if to make his cup of bitterness overflow, the garrison at Callao, incensed because its pay was in arrears —Bolívar was at his wits' end trying to raise money— revolted and sent envoys to the Spaniards offering to turn the port over to them. Canterac at once dispatched Rodil, one of his officers, to occupy Callao in the name of the King of Spain.

Then, as a crowning blow, Torre Tagle, nominal "President" of Peru, surrendered Lima, the Peruvian capital, to the Spaniards.

The patriots were now practically reduced to Trujillo. Bolívar's fortunes were again at low ebb. Yet, in a typical burst of superb self-confidence, he boasted, in the spring of 1824, when things were at their blackest: "Before a year is out we shall be at Potosí!"

An empty piece of bombast, seemingly, if ever there was one! Potosí, the city of which he spoke, the center of the richest silver-mining district in the Spanish New World, was many leagues to the south, and thousands of Spanish soldiers occupied the intervening territory.

Yet the boast was no empty one!

Chapter XVI

"STEP OF CONQUERORS!"

GREAT days are about to dawn for Simon Bolívar, for Antonio José Sucre, for the Venezuelan and New Granadan soldiers who have followed their banners from far-away homelands, for the men of Quito and Peru and the adventurers from Europe, who have enrolled themselves beneath those banners, scenting the air of victory.

With tireless energy the Liberator sets himself to prepare his troops for the battles which he knows impend, which he knows must be won by him if South America is to cast off the yoke of Spain and emerge into the sunlight of liberty. In person he attends to the drilling of his men; to the incorporation of new batches of recruits into the army; to the gathering together of cattle and all sorts of foodstuffs for feeding the soldiers in the arid Andean wastes where they will soon be maneuvering and combating; to the hoarding of munitions and equipment against the days of struggle sure to come.

Bolívar's fellow leaders, La Mar and Lara and the rest, toil night and day to whip the greenhorns into shape, to store up the sinews of war against the dawn of bloody battle about to redden the skies. But best of all in these preliminaries for conflict, ablest and most tireless of all, is Sucre. Gone for him are leisure and amuse-

ment and sleep. The Liberator's right-hand man he is—indefatigable in aid, wise in counsel, devoted in friendship, honest in everything.

Three times he crosses the terrible range of the Peruvian Andes, towering thousands of feet above the surrounding plains, on missions for his chief, braving hardships innumerable. In the discharge of his duties he penetrates to remote corners of the mountain lands scarcely ever before touched by the foot of man.

August, 1824. Midsummer of the most fateful year in South American history.

All is ready in the patriots' camp for putting Peru's freedom—and, with it, perhaps, the freedom of the rest of South America—to the hazard of battle. With Peru once freed, there will be small chance for Spain to raise her head again in the New World; but, should the Spaniards succeed in crushing Bolívar and recovering complete supremacy over the ancient land of the Incas, strategically the most important of all their South American colonies, they may easily strike out both northward and southward and plant the banner of Spain again over the lands where the soldiers of Bolívar and San Martín have trampled it in the dust.

Encircled by snow-white peaks, in the biting air of the Andes—on the roof, literally, of the American continent—Bolívar reviews his army. The review is held at Cerro de Pasco, more than twelve thousand feet above the sea. Before the eyes of the Liberator about ten thousand men march and countermarch in evolutions worthy of trained European soldiers, for he and his helpers have spared no pains to instill discipline into those whose mission

it is to bring independence to the lands of their birth. Not much of a force, these ten thousand, judged by the standards of other lands and other wars. Yet hosts of millions have fought for prizes infinitesimal in worth compared with those now dangled by fate, in tantalizing brightness, before the eyes of this little army, lined up on this lofty Andean plateau, with the loftiest peaks of the American continent contemplating it in grim and silent majesty.

Having been entrusted with full military authority by the Colombian Congress and the republican authorities of Peru, Bolívar keeps in his hands the supreme command. Nevertheless, the titular commander-in-chief is Sucre.

The troops are divided into three divisions: the Vanguard, under the young and dashing New Granadan, Córdova, bravest of the brave; the Center, under La Mar, formerly an officer in the armies of Spain, now burning to prove his devotion to the cause of the patriots; the Rearguard, under Lara, one of Bolívar's most trusted Venezuelans. Chief of staff is the Peruvian Santa Cruz. The cavalry are under the orders of the valiant Necochea, with William Miller, a doughty son of Kent, in England, at the head of the Peruvian squadrons, and the heroic Carvajal in charge of the veteran riders from Venezuela and New Granada.

The day of decision is at hand!

In the camp of Bolívar there is unbounded confidence; the flash of martial enthusiasm lights up every eye. Every man, even the private in the ranks, knows perfectly well what is coming; what is being staked;

what disasters to the cause of independence defeat is sure to bring; what glory, dazzling and undying, will radiate from victory.

In the Spanish camp, too, every soldier feels confidence and elation, engendered by years of almost unbroken successes in the field against the Peruvian insurgents. La Serna, the white-haired Viceroy, Canterac, the French adventurer heading King Ferdinand's troops, and all their subordinates, from generals to riflemen, look without apprehension to the impending test. Every Spanish officer feels that his men will acquit themselves in a manner befitting those who wear the uniform, and are drawn up beneath the flag, of haughty Spain.

With the hostile armies converging ever nearer, with the smell of powder and blood already in the air, Simon Bolívar launches a proclamation breathing the very breath of victory:

"Soldiers!"—thus it reads—"you are about to complete the greatest task ever entrusted by heaven to man: that of freeing a world from slavery!

"Soldiers! The foes whom you are about to vanquish boast of fourteen years of triumph! That means you are going to meet men worthy of pitting their arms against yours, which have flashed in a thousand battles!

"Soldiers! Peru and all America expect you to bring them peace, the daughter of victory. Even Liberal Europe gazes upon you, entranced, because the liberty of the New World is the hope of the whole world. Will you destroy that hope? No! No! You are invincible!"

After the grand review at Cerro de Pasco Bolívar and Sucre set their army in motion. From the bank of the

lake of Reyes, thousands of feet above sea level, they catch sight, on the morning of the sixth of August, of the Spanish army marching along the other shore.

Canterac is not quite ready to fight; slowly he seeks to withdraw his forces, avoiding for the moment contact with his enemy. But the patriots are filled with ardor, impatient to get at the Spaniards, reluctant to delay any longer the hazard of battle. In the hope of preventing the withdrawal of the enemy's forces and forcing them to face him Bolívar sends against them the best of his cavalry. Under Necochea and the Englishman, Miller, they gallop along the lake front, bathed in bright sunshine and framed in a circle of snowy mountain pinnacles, and debouch on the great plain of Junín.

Canterac proves himself a wily opponent. Suddenly halting his army, which all along has been slowly retreating in the face of the foe, he commands his cavalry to wheel about, and launches them at the gallop against the horsemen of Bolívar, before the latter have had time to form in line on the plain. At full speed, brandishing swords over their heads, with lances lowered in deadly menace and wild cries issuing from their lips, the Spaniards thunder across the plain and strike full against their adversaries.

Now begins one of the strangest of battles. Not a single shot is fired. There is nothing but the piercing call of trumpets, the thud of steel against steel, the snorting of blood-maddened horses, sudden agonized exclamations from those cut down by swords or run through by lances, yells and curses from thousands of men, savagely fighting. Having struck the patriots with such fury and suddenness, the Spaniards at first sweep all before

them; despite desperate endeavors on the part of Bolívar's officers his squadrons are near to being broken and hurled back.

But at this perilous moment Braun, a brave officer of the Colombian Mounted Grenadiers, rallying a few determined riders around him, heroically drives against the onrushing squadrons of Spain. That gives a chance to William Miller, to Silva and Carvajal and other centaurs, to pull some more horsemen together, whirl them about and send them, amid savage yells, into the ranks of the advancing enemy, who are thus brought to a sudden stop.

Another clash—still never a shot—a scrimmage like the battles of the knights of centuries ago—nothing lacking but the plumes and helmets and suits of armor.

After a few moments of terrific fighting, the Spaniards break. Pell-mell, they are pursued across the plain of Junín by Bolívar's cavalrymen. Shaken and panting, their horses flecked with foam and blood, the horsemen of Canterac at last reach the protection of the Spanish infantry, now in its turn debouching on the plain.

Ere they are safe, however, they lose a full five hundred men in dead and wounded. The victors rein in their snorting horses. They, too, have gaps in their ranks, but their losses are not half those of the enemy. Necochea, their gallant leader, has received no less than seven lance-thrusts—yet he is still in the saddle!

From a vantage point on the lake shore, Bolívar has witnessed the strange battle. He gnashes his teeth—if only he had infantry to throw in, masses of infantry, infantry fresh and eager for action, he might turn what has been merely a spectacular feat of arms into a de-

cisive victory! But his foot soldiers have just covered miles over the worst possible roads; to get them, on top of their exertions, into the battle line and use them for the winning of a pitched battle is beyond the ability of any general.

Covering his shattered cavalry with his infantry regiments, Canterac slowly withdraws his army—still undefeated, despite the blow administered to his cavalrymen. Bolívar and Sucre must wait yet a while before really measuring strength with their foes.

For several weeks after Junín the two armies maneuver, sometimes within sight of each other; but the great battle which both know must be fought is still postponed. Before risking it, both commanders wish to get into their hands all possible advantages.

October. Bolívar, his mind filled with the coming crucial decision, receives news that the Colombian Congress, restive at his long absence in Peru, has withdrawn from him the special authority in civil and military affairs which it had accorded him three years before, on the eve of his departure for the south. He is furious—behind the slap from Congress he suspects the hand of Santander, never his friend despite surface cordiality.

Why not ignore the action of Congress? Surely Simon Bolívar is strong enough to defy a lot of speechifying nonentities, bereft of vision, unable to realize the tremendous importance of the battle which every day is bringing nearer. But he rejects such thoughts. How can he expect others to respect the law if he, President and Dictator, is to flout it?

He summons Sucre, shows him the message from Con-

gress, depriving him of authority, turns over the supreme command of the army to his lieutenant.

Well, it is certainly in good hands! If there is any man besides Bolívar who can issue triumphant from the impending ordeal, it is Sucre. The two men look each other silently in the eye, clasp hands. Then Simon Bolívar, angry but controlling his anger, sets out for Lima, the Peruvian capital.

Rage seizes the army. Many officers sign a round robin, urging Bolívar to take steps to set aside the action of the Colombian Congress—broadly hinting, indeed, that they will back him if he ignores it entirely. But the Liberator is adamant. The greatest battle of the wars for South American independence, the battle foreseen by him, which for years he has visioned in his dreams, for which he has worked uncounted hours, drilling and exhorting his soldiers, must be fought without him!

By the beginning of November he is back at Lima, many miles from the lofty Andean plateaus, with their frames of grim white-topped peaks, on which the destiny of a continent is to be decided.

At Lima he plunges into routine business. He writes to the Colombian Congress announcing his compliance with their instructions. Also he sends in his resignation of the Presidency of Colombia; that much he must grant to his wounded feelings. Dictator of Peru he remains. But it is Sucre, up there among the snows, who is tasting the wine of war, stretching out eager hands for the laurels of victory! Days of gloom for Simon Bolívar, days of bitterness!

Thus are things at the outset of December, 1824.

General Antonio José Sucre, victor of Ayacucho, right-hand man of Bolívar in his campaigns in Ecuador and Peru

Then, one day, a messenger comes galloping into Lima, vaults from his panting horse, seeks out Bolívar, hands him a dispatch.

The Liberator reads the opening lines. To the amazement of the officers gathered around him, he runs his hands through his hair, starts dancing around the room like a man suddenly gone mad. He shouts incoherently, brandishing the dispatch over his head. He tears off his coat, flings it into a corner, starts dancing again. For several minutes he is unable to explain his actions to the astonished spectators. At last he flings himself into a chair, holds out the dispatch toward them. An officer seizes the paper, others crowd around him, eyes light up at what they read.

Here is the picture shining behind the words of that dispatch—sent by Sucre to Bolívar on the night of the ninth of December, 1824:

Maneuvering among the mountains—everywhere towering masses of rock, canopied with white. First honors to Spain—Canterac administers a hard slap to Sucre at Matará—several hundred sorely-needed patriots are killed and wounded. So it is only about seven thousand men whom the Venezuelan draws up in battle formation on the field of Ayacucho. Against him La Serna, the Viceroy of Peru, and Canterac range some ten thousand soldiers.

Snowy peaks frame the battle-field. No retreat for whomsoever is beaten. Victory or destruction.

The Spaniards, in glittering array, crown the heights of Cundurcanca, above the field. Facing them are the patriots—Colombians, Peruvians, British, other soldiers

of fortune. The right is under Córdova—wild, handsome, brave as a lion; Jacinto Lara, from Venezuela, commands the center; at the head of the left is the ex-Spanish officer, La Mar.

Horses prance and neigh. Men are as if intoxicated by the air of battle. Explosive cheers resound as officers ride along the front of the various regiments, exhorting them to do their utmost. Wild huzzas pierce the keen Andean air, hats and guns are waved in frantic elation. Swords clatter, bayonets flash.

Galloping his horse from battalion to battalion of his little army, reining it up before each, Sucre calls to the troops to be worthy of themselves, of Simon Bolívar—for never does this chivalrous knight forget his absent chief.

"Viva el Libertador!" Ever more frantic are the cheers; the long lines of men rock with martial enthusiasm. "Remember your triumphs, your glories, your honor, your country!" shouts Sucre. "Viva!" thunder his soldiers. The din they make rolls across the field to the Spaniards massed on the heights. They answer with defiant yells and salvos of cheering.

Young Córdova, ever extravagant, now beside himself with excitement, leaps from his horse in front of his men, pulls out his pistol, shoots the horse dead.

"Now it is impossible for me to escape if we are beaten!" he cries. "Viva! Viva!" roar his regiments. Puffs of smoke meet their shouts; ear-splitting crashes come from the Spanish lines. The enemy artillery has opened fire, the battle is on.

"Viva España!" "Viva Bolívar!" For one breathless moment, the stillness is shaken only by shouts of com-

mand on the heights where the Spaniards are massed.

"Fix bayonets! Charge!"

Arms glistening in the sunlight, pressing forward in perfect formation, the Spanish left surges down from the heights to do battle with young Córdova.

Sweeping the field with his eyes, Sucre waits until the advancing Spaniards are well on their way. Then he commands Córdova to lead a countercharge, with infantry and cavalry.

Córdova, hair wild, eyes shining in madness, whips out his sword, leaps to the front of his men and shouts the words which have given him immortality in South America.

Not for him any ordinary formula of military command devised for such a juncture—not for him frigid instructions to soldiers on how they are to carry their muskets, with what sort of step they are to advance. Not for young Córdova!

Waving his sword over his head, he thunders out the phrase which every schoolboy in South America spouts, which never fails to send thrills to the soul of every South American grown-up:

"Arms—*as you please!* Step—*of conquerors!*"

His regiments plunge forward, striking the Spaniards in mid-stride of their charge. Supporting Córdova's frenzied infantry-men are the squadrons of cavalry commanded by Miller the Englishman. They crash into the Spanish ranks—howling, hacking, stabbing. For a while the Spaniards meet the avalanche resolutely, but nothing can stand long against mad Córdova and cool Miller. The Spaniards are flung back in disorder, with patriot infantry and horse in hot pursuit.

Meanwhile another Spanish column, descending from the heights, has driven furiously against Sucre's left. So tremendous is the shock borne by Lara's battalions that some of them are pushed back and the patriot center is menaced. But Sucre, watching every move of the battle with an intentness from which nothing escapes, now hurls into the front lines some of his best troops—the Vargas Battalion, heroes of Pantano de Vargas and Boyacá, and the Hussars of Junín—named thus because of their fine conduct in the great cavalry clash of a few weeks before. Again they prove their mettle. The tide of the Spanish advance is stemmed. Lara and La Mar get a breathing-spell, in which they busily reform their shaken lines.

And now Sucre realizes that the climax of the battle is upon him, the moment from which victory or defeat must spring. In ringing tones he calls to his reserves—four battalions of tried Colombian veterans and some squadrons of Peruvian horse.

"Charge!" Off they go, straight at the Spaniards. At the same time the patriot commander-in-chief dispatches messages to Córdova and Miller, calling on them for still greater effort.

The reserves smash in the Spanish right; the men of Córdova, in a dash that none can stop, sweep up the heights, trampling under foot enemy dead and wounded, breaking every vestige of resistance, until they are on the very top of Cundurcanca, the heart of the Spanish position.

All resistance crumbles. Shattered, spent, surrounded, hundreds of Spaniards are made prisoner. La Serna, Viceroy of Peru, his head bleeding from a wound, gives

up his sword to one of the Córdova's officers who comes tumbling, pistol in hand, into the Spanish lines.

Meanwhile La Mar, urging forward the regiments of the patriot center, has swept across the ravines in front of his position and driven the Spaniards from the field, and Lara has accounted for every Spaniard daring to resist the advance of his soldiers.

The battle of Ayacucho, most famous ever fought in South America, has been won by Antonio José Sucre—won by a Venezuelan, fighting many hundreds of miles from his native Venezuela, under the guidance of Simon Bolívar, another Venezuelan.

Three hundred years after its conquest by Pizarro the Spaniard, the rich land of Peru has been snatched from the grasp of Spain. For Ayacucho is the most decisive sort of a victory. Soon after the capture of the Viceroy, Canterac, the Spanish commander, sends a flag of truce to Sucre, offering to surrender. Ever chivalrous, ever a gentleman, the victorious leader of the patriots grants him the most honorable of terms. "Although," he writes to Bolívar, "the plight of the enemy might have justified our exacting unconditional surrender, I thought it would be worthy of American generosity to concede some honors to those who gave up their arms after being victorious in Peru for fourteen years."

Besides La Serna and Canterac, thirteen Spanish generals and scores of lesser officers, filing silently before the victors, hand over their swords. More than three thousand Spanish soldiers stretch their rifles on the ground, before the long lines of grimy, rejoicing foes. About as many more Spaniards lie dead or wounded on the field. Others, flinging away their arms,

flee right and left—with little chance, however, of ultimate escape, in the cold, roadless wastes of the Andes.

Included in the booty are all the Spanish cannon, immense quantities of rifles and munitions, huge amounts of army stores.

The terms of surrender, in so far as completeness is concerned, leave nothing to be desired. La Serna formally surrenders to the victor all of Peru, all Spanish troops still under arms there, even the port of Callao, still defiantly held by brave Rodil.

Late on the night of Ayacucho, La Serna, last Spanish Viceroy of Peru, flung in an hour from a lofty pedestal of power to the misery of defeat and capture, sits in dejection within a dirty little hovel, close to the battlefield. His eyes are downcast, his clothing rumpled; his white hair is streaked and clotted with the blood from his wound. Gone is all the old Spaniard's viceregal splendor; nothing now for him but to await the bidding of the man who has hurled him and his pomp into the dust!

General Miller, the Englishman from Kent, visits him. Broken but ever courteous, as becomes a son of Spain, the fallen Viceroy gravely receives his visitor. Miller, equally courteous, says to him—ever an Englishman, despite the thousands of miles separating him from his native land, despite the fury of battle through which he has just come:

"Won't you have a cup of tea?"

La Serna nods a grateful affirmative.

With delighted ejaculations and weird, improvised dance-steps, Simon Bolívar devours the news of Ayacucho. His eyes race over Sucre's report—at each sentence the bright eyes flash still more brightly.

"The campaign is finished," writes Sucre, from his lofty eyrie of triumph, "the independence of Peru and the peace of America have been signed on this battlefield. The entire army feels that the trophies won by it in the victory of Ayacucho are an offering worthy of acceptance by the Liberator of Colombia!"

Ever generous, Sucre tells of the promotions conferred by him at the close of the battle on the most deserving among his heroes; he urges upon Bolívar the advisability of granting further honors. "What pleases me most," writes this paragon of military modesty, "is to have fulfilled the task to which you assigned me." And he concludes his missive:

"Good-by, general! This letter is badly written, the ideas expressed in it are all confused; nevertheless, I think, in itself, it is worth something: for it contains the news of a great victory and of the liberation of Peru. The only reward I ask for myself is that you continue to be my friend!"

Immediately after Ayacucho Sucre marched on Cuzco, the ancient capital of the Incas, which he occupied on December 24, two weeks and a day after his great victory. All along his line of march scattered Spanish surrendered to him; others dispersed at his approach. Only the Spanish general Olañeta, he who had helped discomfit Santa Cruz in Upper Peru, still re-

mained in arms. Sucre made short work of him. Within four months of the battle of Ayacucho, Olañeta was defeated and killed.

On April 4, 1825, the victor of Ayacucho made his triumphal entry into Potosí, center of South America's most famous silver-mining district, from which Spain for centuries drew such fabulous wealth that "rich as Potosí" is a Spanish proverb. Thus was Bolívar's seemingly mad prophecy gloriously fulfilled. At the blackest hour of his fortunes, with Spaniards menacing him on every side, with the freeing of Peru apparently hopeless, the independence of the lands already liberated by him seriously menaced, with faint-hearted friends abandoning him and sneering foes confidently awaiting his downfall, he had arrogantly proclaimed: "Within a year we shall be in Potosí!" Now, twelve months later, acclaimed by delighted multitudes, Sucre, Bolívar's able and chivalrous lieutenant, was indeed in the Silver City!

Convoking the Peruvian Congress, Bolívar received from it powers which made him more than ever Dictator of Peru. In the whole length and breadth of South America only the port of Callao remained under the Spanish flag—Puerto Cabello, the last Spanish stronghold in Venezuela having capitulated to Venezuelan forces under Páez the Centaur in 1823, while Bolívar was busy in lands to the southward.

After sixteen months of stubborn resistance, Rodil, the Spanish defender of Callao, finally surrendered early in 1825. Spanish rule in South America, made possible when Christopher Columbus sailed along its coasts at the end of the fifteenth century, made real by the sanguinary victories of Pizarro and Almagro, of

Benalcázar and Valdivia and the rest of Spain's iron conquistadores, came to an end when brave Rodil capitulated.

His heroic defense was doomed months before he gave up the fight, but he obstinately refused to surrender, hoping always that help would come to him from across the seas. Standing to his duty like a soldier and a Spaniard he held out until death had cut awful gaps in the ranks of his men, until disease and famine had transformed into living skeletons those not dead, until hope of succor had faded from the heart of even the most sanguine Spaniard in the fortress.

Then and only then did Rodil haul down the last Spanish flag in South America.

Chapter XVII

FLOOD-TIDE

FLOOD-TIDE for Simon Bolívar!

He has liberated four countries—his native land of Venezuela, New Granada, Quito, Peru. They comprise a territory far more than ten times the size of the Spain from which he has wrested them, two and a half times as large as France, Germany, the British Isles, Spain and Italy combined.

Across the huge ranges of the Andes, across desolate wastes and roaring torrents and freezing páramos, he has led his soldiers to victory after victory. Braving the might of Spain, he has swept aside her armies and ended her hitherto unchallenged domination of Spanish America. What the conquistadores gave her, he has taken away; in place of the red-and-yellow banner, planted all the way from Panama to Potosí by the conquistadores, he has flung to the wind four new flags. They signify the accession to the family of the world's nations of four free republics.

Everywhere he is acclaimed; everywhere he meets cheers and flattery; everywhere statesmen bow to his dictation and generals lower their swords to his authority. In four countries, despite jealousy and factional

rivalry, despite the ambitions and hopes of other leaders, there is no prestige like his, no other star shining so brightly in the ascendant.

Flood-tide for Simon Bolívar! Yet he is not content. The spur of his restless genius urges him still further. Another, less ambitious, would have made Lima, the fair capital of Peru, the end of his triumphal progress—Lima, which has given Bolívar a golden sword of honor, fêted him, strewn his path with flowers, hung his portrait in its Municipal Hall with the inscription: "He created Colombia, restored Peru, gave peace to America!" He has been confirmed in his authority as Dictator of Peru. He is—despite his recent resignation—still President of "La Gran Colombia." Everywhere from far-away Venezuela, his native land, to the borders of Argentina and Chile, he is supreme. Yet he lusts for still more glory!

Leaving Lima, he passes in triumph through other Peruvian cities. Amid acclamation he enters Arequipa, throned amid the snow-capped Andes. Like a victorious general of ancient Rome, he rides into Cuzco, the ancient capital of Peru, captured at the point of the sword three hundred years before by Pizarro and the cruel Spaniards under his command. From Cuzco Bolívar has already received a priceless gift—the banner borne by Pizarro's men when they wrested the city from the soldiers of the last Inca. Sucre found it when he entered Cuzco after the battle of Ayacucho and lost no time in presenting it to his chief and fellow Venezuelan, with this message: "I send the banner under which Pizarro entered this illustrious capital of the Incas three hundred years ago to the Liberator, as a trophy worthy of the

warrior who showed the Colombian army the road to glory and to the liberation of Peru." *

From Cuzco Bolívar journeys to Potosí. All along his triumphal way his brain has been seething with a new idea. Already he has liberated four countries, but that is not enough! There must a fifth to crown his life-work! Southern Peru must be made into an independent country. The Peruvians, to be sure, want it as part of Peru, and the Argentinos are inclined to consider it part of Argentina, but the claims of both can be set aside.

Bolívar convenes an assembly at Chuquisaca, the principal town of southern Peru, which forthwith declares that land a free and independent republic under the title of Bolivia, a word derived straight from the name of the Liberator. So now he actually has one of the countries of the world named for him!—this man, derided as a mad dreamer, who, in the teeth of obdurate opposition, has marched, victorious, from his native Venezuela, hundreds of leagues away, across roadless plains and pathless mountains, carrying in his hand the gift of liberty to lands which, before his advent, had scarcely seen a Venezuelan or heard of Venezuela. To lend even greater glory to his native land, Sucre, another Venezuelan, most upright and able of Bolívar's lieutenants, the victor of Ayacucho, is made first President of Bolivia and the name of its capital is changed from Chuquisaca to Sucre.

Thus, just twenty years after vowing, on the Monte Sacro in Rome to bring freedom to Spanish America,

* Bolívar presented Pizarro's banner to his native city of Carácas, where it is reverently preserved to this day.

this restless son of Venezuela has kept his vow and earned the right to the title inscribed today on statues to him all over the lands which he freed: "Simon Bolívar, Liberator of Venezuela, New Granada, Ecuador and Peru, and Founder of Bolivia!"

He even bends his gaze beyond Bolivia! He talks with a delegation from Buenos Aires; there are hints of possible intervention by him in Argentine disputes with Brazil about Uruguay, in others concerning the land of Paraguay, far to the south. There are negotiations with Chile, lying south of Peru and Bolivia, involving possible aid from Bolívar in driving from Chilian territory the last Spaniards still holding out against the triumphant advance of the forces of freedom.

Nothing comes of these talks and hints. Whereupon, undeterred at finding Bolivia the southernmost limit of his progress, he turns his untiring mind northward!

How about freeing Cuba? How about sending a squadron to flaunt the flag of liberty on the very coast of Spain herself? These projects and others as daring flit into the throbbing brain of the Liberator.

Returning to Lima, after creating the republic of Bolivia, he hears that Rodil has at last surrendered the fortress of Callao. Victory! Not a Spanish flag flying now anywhere on the mainland of the American continent! And it is he, Simon Bolívar, branded as dreamer and madman, who has torn down every one of the ensigns that used to wave so proudly over cities and forts all the way from the isthmus of Panama to the snow-covered pinnacles of Bolivia.

Flood-tide for Simon Bolívar!

Acclaimed everywhere by enthusiastic crowds, his mind filled with plans for constitutions and other feats of statesmanship, news is brought to Bolívar that his old teacher, Simon Rodríguez, with whom he had climbed the Monte Sacro at Rome twenty years before and before whom he had made his vow to bring freedom to his native shores, has returned to the New World, after wandering over a dozen Old-World lands, and is actually at Bogotá.

Bolívar is overjoyed at the news. Forgetting the dazzling position he has achieved, the battles he has won, the laurel wreaths placed on his head wherever he goes, his thoughts fly back to the days of his youth, to Simon Rodríguez—eccentric, unkempt, spouting Jean-Jacques Rousseau—with whom he had walked through France and Italy, seeking solace from his grief at the death of his beloved Maria Teresa.

Simon Rodríguez! The man who educated him, guided him, instilled into him not only the philosophy of books but that of trees and skies and running water! Hastily summoning a secretary, Bolívar, pacing up and down according to his habit, rapidly dictates:

"Oh, my master! Oh, my friend! Oh, my Robinson! * What!—you in Colombia, you in Bogotá, without a word to me, spoken or written! . . .

"Do you remember the day when we climbed the Monte Sacro at Rome and vowed on that holy soil to bring liberty to our country? Surely you have not forgotten that day of eternal glory for you and me. . . .

* "Robinson" was the name adopted by the eccentric savant when he began his wanderings.

"How eagerly must you have followed my footsteps in life—you who set them on the path they have traveled! You it was who shaped my heart for the love of liberty, of justice, of all that is great and beautiful. I have walked in the path you pointed out to me. You have been my pilot, though you remained far away from me, watching me from the shores of Europe.

"You cannot possibly imagine how deeply the lessons you gave me have been engraved upon my heart; not even a comma in all the wise sentences uttered to me by you has ever been erased from my memory; your utterances, shining before the eyes of my intellect, have served me as infallible guides.

"Well, you have observed what I have done, you know the thoughts set down by me in my writings, you have seen my soul depicted on paper, and surely you have said to yourself: 'All this is something of mine. I planted this plant, I watered it, I straightened it when it was frail. And now that it is robust, strong and fruitful, mine are its fruits! Let me savor them in the garden which I planted. Let me enjoy the shade of its friendly branches, because to do that is my inalienable right, a right transcending that of all others.'

"Yes, my dear friend, you are now among us—a thousand times blest be the day when you set foot on the shores of Colombia! . . .

"Since I cannot hasten to your side, you must hasten to mine. . . . Come to contemplate, in ecstasy, the immense fatherland which you see before you, hewn from the rock of despotism by the victorious tools of the liberators, your brothers.

"Come! Your eyes will never tire of the pictures you will see in this land, of the colossal wonders, treasures, secrets and prodigies contained in this superb Colombia

of ours! Come to the Chimborazo!—let your audacious footsteps scale the Titan's ladder, the crown of the world, the impregnable battlement of the new universe. . . .

"You, who are a friend of Nature, come hither to ask her age, her way of life, her primal essence. Over there, in wornout Europe, you have seen only relics and unasserted rights of Mother Nature. Over there she is bent under the weight of centuries and disease and the pestiferous breath of mankind. But here she is virginal, immaculate, beautiful, just as she came from the hand of the Creator! Here the profane touch of man has not withered her divine loveliness, her marvelous graces. . . .

"Give this letter to the Vice-President, ask him for money in my name, and hasten to me!

"BOLÍVAR."

Simon Rodríguez took his pupil at his word. Hastening southward he presented himself at Bolívar's headquarters in Peru. Nor were the glowing words of the letter, the welcome which it promised to the eccentric savant, mere empty form. O'Leary, Bolívar's biographer, was a witness of the meeting between master and pupil, after well-nigh a quarter of a century. "I saw the humble pedagogue get off his horse at the door of the Dictator's palace," says the Irishman, "and, instead of the rude repulse from the sentinel posted there which he possibly expected I saw him received with all the affection due from a friend, all the respect due to his gray hairs. Bolívar embraced him with filial love and treated him with a cordiality which revealed the kindness of a heart which prosperity had failed to spoil!"

On his triumphant progress southward Bolívar has been accompanied by the most famous of his female favorites. Manuelita Sáenz she is called, a daughter of New Granada, the wife—when Simon Bolívar came into her life—of Doctor Thorne, an Englishman. On the Liberator's arduous marches she has ridden gallantly by his side, dressed in military uniform like a man, carrying sword and pistols. Now, with Bolívar at the height of his glory in Peru, the fair Manuelita is more martial than ever in bearing. She wears a red coat and dashing headgear such as would suit any brave male soldier, rides everywhere in the Liberator's company. She is beautiful, witty, unconventional in a land where convention imposes on women iron shackles. To Manuelita there is no will but her own, no man but Bolívar, no law but love.

Her husband, who adores her in spite of her elopement, begs her to return to him. She sits down and pens him this letter:

"No, no, no!—ask me no more, man, for the love of God! Why do you make me write to you in defiance of my resolve not to do it! Come now—what do you gain thereby except making me tell you a thousand times No!

"Sir, you are excellent, you are inimitable, never shall I deny that of you, but—listen, my friend!—to leave *you* in order to go to General Bolívar is something, to leave a husband without your qualities would be nothing!

"Do you really think that I, the mistress of Bolívar for seven years and assured of possessing his heart, would prefer to be the wife of the Father, the Son or the Holy Trinity? If there is one thing I regret it is that

you are not even a better man than you are, in order that I might have had the added satisfaction of leaving you. I know perfectly well that there is no power that can unite me to Bolívar under the auspices of what you call honor. But—do you think me less honored because he is my lover and not my husband? Ah, I do not worry about social conventions, invented by men for the purpose of tormenting each other!

"Leave me alone, my dear Englishman. Let us make another arrangement: in heaven we'll get married again, but on this earth—never! Do you think this a bad idea? If so, you are a very hard man to satisfy. Up in the celestial regions we shall live an angelic life, an entirely spiritual life—(for, as a man, you are a bit dull). Up in heaven everything will be English style for monotony in life is reserved for your nation—(in love, I mean, for who is as clever as the English in commercial and maritime things?). You English like love without pleasures, conversation without grace. You must walk at a slow pace, salute reverentially, sit down and get up carefully, joke without laughing. Such things are formalities for the gods—as for me, unhappy mortal that I am, always laughing at myself, at you, at all this English solemnity, what a bad time I should have in heaven! Quite as bad as if I went to live in England or Constantinople, because the English seem to me tyrannical with women—though you were not a tyrant toward me. You were, however, more jealous than a Portuguese! I don't want that sort of thing! Have I not good taste?

"Well, no more joking. Formally, without laughing, with all the seriousness, truthfulness and purity of an Englishwoman, I tell you *that I shall not go back to you again!* The fact that you are an Anglican and I an atheist is the principal religious obstacle, the fact that I am in love with another man is the biggest and most important

obstacle of all. Come now, acknowledge that I have thought this out seriously!

"Invariably your friend,
"MANUELA."

Having written this epistle, the sprightly dame calmly informed Bolívar:

"Please note that my husband is a Catholic and that I never was an atheist in my life! The only thing that made me write as I did was my desire to remain separated from him!"

Desiring to testify to the high esteem in which Simon Bolívar is held in the United States, on account of his great services to the cause of independence in South America, members of the family of George Washington decide to send him a gold medal, presented to the Father of his Country by the American nation, and a locket containing a portrait of Washington and a bit of his hair. Washington's stepson and adopted son, George Washington Parke Custis, had requested Lafayette, then on a visit to the United States to be the intermediary in transmitting the gift to Bolívar.

On the locket was the following Latin inscription: *Auctoris Libertatis Americanæ in Septentrione Hanc Imaginem Dat Filius Ejus Adoptatus Illi Qui Gloriam Similem in Austro Adeptus Est.* (This portrait of the Liberator of North America is presented by his adopted son to him who achieved similar glory in South America.)

Under date of September 1, 1825, Lafayette sends to Bolívar from the city of Washington the gifts entrusted to him by Custis, with a letter couched in the most cordial and flattering language.

"I am charged," writes Lafayette, "with a duty that does me great honor. . . . I feel that, of all living men and of all men in history, my friend General Washington would not have preferred any to yourself as the recipient of this gift. What more can I say to the great citizen whom South America hails with the title of Liberator, a title confirmed by both hemispheres—a man who bears in his heart an unlimited love for liberty and an absolutely pure love for republicanism? . . . Permit me to offer you, Mr. President-Liberator, the homage of my profound and respectful esteem."

Bolívar is delighted both with the gift from Custis and the letter from Lafayette. He hastens to give thanks, through the illustrious Frenchman, for the honor done him by the Washington family, couching his letter in terms as cordial and admiring as those wherewith Lafayette addressed him.

"Words cannot express how highly I value this present," he writes. "Washington's family has done me an honor beyond my wildest hopes, because Washington presented by Lafayette is the crown of all rewards that can possibly come to any human being. . . . Ah, what mortal could be worthy of the honors which you and Mount Vernon have showered upon me! My embarrassment is as great as the immensity of the gratitude which I am now expressing to you, together with the assurance of that respect and veneration which every man owes to the Nestor of Liberty."

The correspondence thus happily initiated between Bolívar and Lafayette continues for years. Nor is there anything perfunctory about the letters exchanged between them—they are by no means empty expressions

of courtesy and flattery such as two celebrities, who had never seen each other, might be expected to exchange. Instead, they have a warmth which might easily lead to the belief that the South American Liberator and the generous French friend of American liberty had lived in lifelong intimacy. All that is needed to show the utter lack of the perfunctory and empty in the Bolívar-Lafayette correspondence is to remark that one letter, sent by the Frenchman to the Venezuelan, is no less than two thousand words in length!

From Peru, where he is being fêted and acclaimed, Bolívar writes to his sister in far-away Carácas, his home. "I have received a request from Hipólita," says the President of La Gran Colombia and of Peru, the Dictator of a realm as big as half a dozen European countries. Hipólita is Simon Bolívar's negro "mammy," who nursed him in infancy, and has proudly followed the successive steps of his brilliant career. President and dictator and victorious general though he has become, he does not forget Hipólita.

"See that she gets whatever she asks for," he tells his sister. "Hipólita gave me the milk that nourished me as a child. She was, to this orphan, both mother and father. She must want for nothing."

For the country that bears his name Bolívar sets to work to draft a Constitution. He divides the power of the government into four sections: Electoral, Legislative, Executive, Judicial. All citizens of Bolivia are to be allowed to vote if able to read and write and if concerned in some industry, art or science. Every ten citi-

zens are to appoint one elector; the electors are then to name the members of the legislative chambers.

The Legislature is to have three Chambers: Tribunes, Senators, Censors. The latter—an echo of the "Moral Power" of Bolívar's projected Angostura Constitution for Venezuela—are to act as referees in disputes between Tribunes and Senators, to watch over the observance of the Constitution, exercise supervision over the conduct of public officials. The Censors are to hold office for life.

The Tribunes are to be concerned with financial, military and naval matters, and to vote the budget. To the Senators is to fall the initiation of judicial, ecclesiastical and commercial matters.

The President is to be elected for life, with a Vice-President to be proposed by the President to the Chambers. In case of the death or incapacity of the President, the Vice-President is to fill his place.

The Judicial power is to be entirely independent of the executive. Slavery is to be abolished. The Press is to be absolutely unmuzzled.

In the autumn of 1826 the Constitution evolved by Bolívar for Bolivia is adopted by that infant republic. Later Peru also adopts it.

Bolívar is made President for life of both republics. In Bolivia, however, he delegates his presidential authority to the faithful Sucre. The hero of Ayacucho does not like the idea of being President for life; he accepts the Presidency on the condition that he may remain in office for two years only. Another condition this sage soldier also makes: that he be permitted to keep with him in Bolivia two thousand Colombian troops.

Sucre does not know the Bolivians—he does know the men from the northern parts of South America—and bayonets are bayonets!

Dazzled by Bolívar's achievements, heads turned by the praise poured upon him from Europe and the United States, some South Americans think he owes one supreme touch to his record of glory. History clearly points the way—nothing in the gift of a republic can be adequate to such genius!—Bolívar must take unto himself royal—nay, imperial—honors!

In the republics freed by him, there are men who turn their backs on liberty and equality to dream of a monarch in their midst. Magnificent titles spring to their minds—"Emperor of the Andes," something to fascinate any ambitious leader, is the most magnificent among them. Ay, Simon Bolívar must crown himself "Emperor of the Andes," make himself monarch of a vast realm stretching from the Caribbean Sea to the borders of Argentina and Chile, greater than the domains of any European monarch except the Czar of all the Russias! Simon Bolívar, in the splendor of his unsurpassed achievement, must take his place among the world's monarchs! Surely, not one of them has luster such as will not yield to his!

Thus the tempters—in Peru and farther to the north.

In his native Venezuela the siren song is sung by—Páez the Centaur! That sturdy champion of freedom, whose llaneros have driven the soldiers of King Ferdinand VII out of Venezuela at the point of their lances, declares himself for monarchy. Páez, supreme in Carácas, and backed by Bolívar's old rival, Mariño,

commander in Venezuela's central provinces, sends southward trusted envoys urging upon the Liberator the advisability of making himself king.

But Bolívar is adamant. Writing from Peru, early in 1826, less than a year and a half after Ayacucho, a bare two months after the surrender of Callao, and the striking of the last Spanish colors in South America, the Liberator speaks to Páez words that remain one of the proudest monuments to his glory:

"You tell me that the situation in Colombia is similar to that in France, when Napoleon was in Egypt, and that it behooves me to say, as he did: 'Ingrates are about to wreck our country, let us rescue it.' "

"Colombia is not France and I am not Napoleon. In France there is a great deal of thinking and an even greater amount of knowledge. The French population is homogeneous, and, besides, war brought France to the brink of a precipice. In Europe there was no great republic except France, and France had always been a kingdom. Its republican government was so discredited and weak as to have fallen into an abyss of execration. The monsters conducting its affairs were as cruel as they were inept; Napoleon was great and unique, and, moreover, exceedingly ambitious.

"Here there is none of this sort of thing. I am not Napoleon nor do I wish to be. Neither do I wish to imitate Cæsar or Iturbide *—such a course seems to me unworthy of my glory. *The title of Liberator is superior to every other bestowed upon human pride; it is impossible that I should degrade it.*

"The population of our countries resembles the

* For a brief space Emperor of Mexico.

French in nothing, nothing, nothing! Our republican form of government has raised our country to glory and prosperity, given it laws and liberty. Those who govern Colombia are not Robespierres nor Marats. Danger is over when hope is born; therefore, there is no imperative cause for taking such a step. The countries surrounding Colombia are republics and Colombia has never been a kingdom. In Colombia a throne would sow terror both because of its loftiness and of its brilliancy. Equality would be destroyed and the Colombians would be threatened with the loss of all their rights to a new-born aristocracy. . . .

"The project of establishing a monarchy, no matter in what form—I tell you this with complete frankness—is not suitable for you nor for me nor for our country!"

In similar strain he writes to Santander, Vice-President in charge at Bogotá, to whose ears has come the story that Páez favors a monarchy and who has written to the Liberator regarding it:

"This plan offends me more than all the insults from my enemies, since it implies that I am a man of vulgar ambition, capable of lowering himself to equality with an Iturbide and the rest of those miserable usurpers. In the view of those favoring this project, no man can be great except in the manner of Alexander, Cæsar and Napoleon. Well, I wish to surpass every one of these in disinterestedness now that I cannot equal them in exploits!"

Bolívar tells Santander of the Constitution which he has framed for Bolivia, urges upon him the advisability of bestowing it upon New Granada, adds that he has written further to Páez to forget his monarchistic plans

and concentrate his thoughts on the advantages of making the Bolivian Constitution the fundamental law of Venezuela.

Republicanism, liberalism, constitutionalism! These are what inspire Bolívar amid the siren songs of the monarchists. Not for him crown and scepter and kingly grandeur. Better to place alongside the title of Liberator that of Father of the Constitution! Ambitious he is—indeed, without ambition who could have climbed to such pinnacles?—but the ambition to exchange liberty for royal authority, laurel wreaths for royal robes, is not the sort which for years has spurred, dazzled and tormented Simon Bolívar! "*The title of Liberator is superior to every other bestowed upon human pride!*" In that sentence the man is pictured with clearness and finality and truth.

Flood-tide for Simon Bolívar!

Chapter XVIII

PAN-AMERICA

SIMON BOLÍVAR always saw the American continent as a whole. Never did he allow himself to be limited by local prejudices; nothing was further from his mentality than "parish politics." As soon as he had crossed the Andes and driven the Spaniards from New Granada, he was intent on uniting that country with his native Venezuela. Having joined the two he turned his eyes southward, and, after more victories, saw the realization of one of his most ambitious —and seemingly maddest—dreams, the welding into one great whole of Quito, New Granada and Venezuela. Had it been within his power, he would have added Peru to this triple entity—nay, in his insatiable desire to see a vast and powerful South American Republic rise on the ruins of Spanish rule, he would have brought the whole of South America under one republican government. He would have had that government direct all the states formed from the old-time Spanish colonies, just as the government at Washington controls the United States from the Atlantic to the Pacific and from Alaska to Florida.

This, however, he frankly recognized to be impossible. Centrifugal forces were too strong in South America. Even in the Liberator's lifetime, the majority of the

Venezuelans thought only of Venezuela; in Bogotá intrigues for an independent New Granada were rife; in Quito there was always antagonism to the northern republics; in Peru people would have none of union with Colombia; and, farther south, in Argentina and Chile, Bolívar's dreams of a great South American Republic were looked upon either as madness or the deep-laid plans of a man drunk with the craving for self-aggrandizement.

He himself soon realized there was little to be done in this direction; that it would be miraculous if his pet creation, the Republic of "La Gran Colombia" managed to hang together for long. However, there was another sort of union which, in his yearning to buttress liberty in South America, he deemed capable of realization and permanency—a flexible union, presupposing no delegation of sovereignty on the part of any country belonging to it, expressing itself through a Congress composed of delegates from all the free nations of America, in such a way as to lend strength to the whole and inspire in the all too hostile nations of Europe a respect for those free nations which none of the latter could hope to inspire alone.

Had this dream become reality, it would have given the nations of America a solidarity among themselves of which our American Continent has always fallen hopelessly short.

It entered the restless mind of Simon Bolívar early in his career. Back in 1815, when he was a penniless fugitive on the island of Jamaica, he wrote about it in his letter to his English friend, Mr. Hyslop. In 1818, when he was at the head of the Venezuelan government

at Angostura, he told a representative of the republican government of Buenos Aires: "As soon as our triumph in Venezuela completes her independence, or more favorable conditions permit more frequent communications and closer relations between our countries, we shall hasten to conclude an American Pact, which, uniting all our republics in one political body, shall place America before the world in an aspect of majesty and grandeur unparalleled in the history of the nations of antiquity. United America—should heaven grant our desire to see it—will be worthy of being called the Queen of Nations, the Mother of Republics. I hope that the government of the River Plate (i.e., Argentina) will coöperate, with its powerful influence, toward rearing this political structure, of which we in Venezuela have sought to lay the foundations ever since the first day of our regeneration."

For years nothing came of this preliminary announcement. Simon Bolívar had more concrete problems confronting him than the realization of magnificent dreams. In Venezuela, Morillo was still unbeaten; nor had Bolívar's army yet crossed the Andes and brought liberty to New Granada.

In 1821, after he had freed his native Venezuela, united it to New Granada and begun the work of adding Quito, as a third member, to the triple Republic of Colombia, the time seemed ripe for his pet project of a general American unification. So he sent an envoy southward, to see what could be done with the republican governments of Peru, Chile and the Argentine, and another to Mexico.

For the time being, Bolívar sought only to form a common front against Spain, far from defeat, as yet,

in South America. He left for the future his splendid dreams of a general American offensive and defensive alliance against European aggression—a Pan-American Union based on a Bolivarian conception of the Monroe Doctrine.

Bolívar's envoy, Mosquera, was favorably received by Peru and Chile; both concluded treaties with Colombia pointed against Spain, the common foe. Santa María, too, his other envoy, was successful in Mexico, which hastened to conclude a similar treaty and signify its friendly interest in further projects of union. Argentina, however, held aloof.

Encouraged by the friendliness of Peruvians, Chilians and Mexicans, Bolívar lost no time in disclosing the real nature of his dream, of which the formation of a general anti-Spanish front was only a preliminary feature.

He stated, in a proclamation, that the basic idea of the contemplated union was the convening of a Pan-American Congress which should act at times of grave emergency, and also form "a point of contact in dangers menacing the community of America's nations, be a faithful interpreter of treaties should doubts arise concerning them, and act as an umpire in any differences that might arise between the said nations."

In short, Simon Bolívar, in his restless quest for everything big in scope, had hit upon the idea of a general international Court of Arbitration! Even to this day the world has not been able to endow itself with such a tribunal, in a genuinely efficacious form. All the more honor, then, to this restless genius for having thought of it a century ago, confronted, though he was, with the

unbeaten armies of Spain, and with the forces of disintegration, already undermining whatever solidarity he had managed to impose upon the nations freed by him!

Bolívar pointed out to the governments adhering favorably to his grandiose design the merits of the Isthmus of Panama as a meeting place. Then, however, came another delay; there was altogether too much fighting to do in Quito and in Peru for the wasting of thought on such splendid dreams as a Pan-American Union. Between 1821 and 1824, Simon Bolívar, brilliantly aided by Sucre, drove the soldiers of Spain from Quito, and, marching triumphantly southward, broke Spanish power in South America once and for all by the splendid victory of Ayacucho.

Having achieved this, he found time to turn once more to the most ambitious of all his dreams.

Soon after Ayacucho, he issued a formal invitation to the nations of the New World to take part in a Pan-American Congress to meet at Panama. Explaining his choice of a meeting-place he said: "If the world were to select a spot for its capital, it would seem that the Isthmus of Panama must needs be chosen for this august destiny, situated as it is in the center of the world, looking in one direction toward Asia, in the other toward Africa and Europe, and equidistant from America's two extremities. . . . The day the plenipotentiaries of our countries meet there will mark an immortal epoch in history. When, a hundred centuries from now, posterity seeks the origins of international law, it will respectfully enshrine the resolutions adopted at Panama. Therein will be found the basis of the first alliances marking the progress of our relations with the rest of

the world. What will the Isthmus of Corinth be then, compared with the Isthmus of Panama?"

The preliminary spade-work of Bolívar's envoys had resulted, in South America, in the adhesion to the project of Colombia, Peru, Chile, the Empire of Brazil and—despite its original reluctance—Argentina. Of the other lands engaged in shaking themselves loose from Spain, Mexico and Guatemala also promised to send envoys.

The United States made a similar promise, though emphasizing its resolve to remain entirely neutral as between the Spanish-American Republics and Spain—"entangling alliances," were quite as much bogeys to North Americans of that day as they now are to their descendants! In his invitation Bolívar clearly showed how much his Pan-American idea resembled the Monroe Doctrine. He asked the United States to send envoys to Panama in order that they "in conjunction with the envoys of Colombia and her associates might adopt efficacious measures toward opposing the foundation of any foreign colonies on the American continent."

Another plan was to have the congress consider whether steps should be taken for freeing Cuba and Puerto Rico. Nay, Bolívar even turned his eyes toward the Canary Islands and the Philippines—what about freeing them? Thus, seventy years before Cuba, Puerto Rico and the Philippines were separated from Spain, the Liberator of Venezuela, New Granada, Quito, Peru and Bolivia was measuring the possibility of adding their liberation to his achievements.

Another result which, Bolívar hoped, would be

achieved at Panama was the abolition of the slave trade between Africa and America.

The negotiations preceding the Pan-American meeting at Panama aroused both interest and suspicion in Europe. Was it really pointed against monarchical Europe? In European chancelleries diplomats of the old school grew restive. Canning wrote to the British Minister at Bogotá asking for information. The Minister went to Santander, the Vice-President in charge, who sought to reassure him. "How can the basic idea of the Congress of Panama be the formation of an anti-monarchical union in America," asked Santander, "if one of those who has been invited to participate in the Congress, and has accepted the invitation, is the Emperor of Brazil?" In order to reassure the British further—for, in Colombia, there was no desire to antagonize them—Santander asked that Great Britain send a representative to Panama. This she agreed to do.

Bolívar, when informed of Santander's action, expressed disapprobation; he did not wish to see any of the European nations exert influence at Panama, since, as he pointed out, they were so strong, compared with the republics of America, that they might easily make their influence dominant.

Great Britain eventually agreed to send an envoy, merely to look and listen—an early appearance, in international affairs, of that strange hybrid, the "official observer," of whom we have heard so much since the World War!

After a series of delays, representatives of Colombia, Peru, Guatemala, and Mexico finally got together at

Panama in the spring of 1826, together with the British official observer, Mr. Dawkins, and an envoy from Holland, also empowered only to attend the meetings of the Congress, without taking an active part.

The Congress was formally convened on June 22, 1826. Despite the fact that Argentina, Brazil, Chile and Bolivia had also agreed to send envoys, none put in an appearance from those countries.

As for the United States, it instructed the American Minister at Bogotá, Mr. Richard C. Anderson, and Mr. J. Sergeant, to go to Panama as the representatives of their country in the Congress. But Anderson died at Cartagena, while en route to the Isthmus, and his fellow envoy set out so late that, when he reached Panama, the Congress had adjourned.

Very little was done at its meetings and that little, as O'Leary, Bolívar's biographer remarks, was more of an ideal than a practical nature. As for Bolívar himself, he soon became intensely dissatisfied with the Congress; the reality fell so woefully short of his splendid dream! He soon saw that his ambition had soared too high. Pan-American solidarity, such as he visualized, was not to be achieved—by him, at least. After the adjournment, he wrote to a friend that the Congress reminded him of that insane Greek of ancient days who, standing upon a rock in the sea and waving his arms, believed that it was he who guided the movements of the vessels navigating the waters around him.

Only in the northern half of the American continent has union been achieved, only there have many millions of people, of conflicting character and views, succeeded in living under one government, in sinking local preju-

dices for the sake of the common good. There, forty-eight free commonwealths, banded together, present a front to the world so solid as to make every would-be aggressor pause. In the southern half, on the other hand, not only has discord kept the former colonies of Spain from uniting, after they had won independence, but internecine strife has stained page after page of their history.

That freedom would be thus sadly misused was clearly foreseen by Bolívar, unless some form of union could be worked out. He had the requisite vision to pierce the veils of the future, but not the requisite power to safeguard the lands to which he had brought independence, and their sister nations in Latin America, from the pitfalls which the future was preparing for them.

No man since Bolívar's day has had that power, and few, very few, have had the desire for American solidarity. All honor to him, therefore, for visualizing United America, splendid in strength and civilization, and for using what power was vouchsafed to him toward making his dream come true!

PART THREE

DOWN THE SLOPE

Chapter XIX

DISILLUSIONMENT

BOLÍVAR had said that he would resign the office of Dictator-President of Peru as soon as the Spaniards had been driven from their last foothold at Callao. Yet after Rodil surrendered that fortress, he still dallied at the head of the Peruvian government, postponing his departure from month to month.

He felt that, as soon as his back was turned, chaos might again engulf the new republic. But that was not the only reason for his dallying. Flattery, ever welcome to him, was being lavished upon him by some of the Peruvians in shameless abundance. Lima was proving a Capua for him, just as it had for San Martín.

Fête after fête was given in the Liberator's honor. There were brilliant balls, at which he, all his life an indefatigable dancer, danced with the lovely ladies of Lima until dawn reddened the skies.

At his country seat of La Magdalena, just outside the city, he lived a life of ease and amours. Manuelita Sáenz remained favorite par excellence and was acknowledged as such by the Peruvians and by the Colombian army. Wherever she went she proudly wore her bright scarlet military coat and white breeches, and behind her rode a squad of cavalrymen, her special guard of honor.

Nevertheless, despite Bolívar's affection for her, she was by no means alone in his favor. So great was the glamour of his achievements, so enduring the good fortune in love which, since early youth, had been his portion, that the task of monopolizing his affections was beyond the power even of the sprightly consort of the forsaken English doctor. More than one fair dame of Lima made the trip out to the Dictator's villa at La Magdalena under the protection of that most unscrupulous of panderers, Night.

Bolívar's continued stay in Peru, the continued presence there of the soldiers brought by him out of the north, began to bring criticism. The Colombian warriors, for one thing, were but too prone to act like conquerors in a subjugated land; only too easily did they give the impression that they, unaided by the Peruvians, had turned the tide in the battles to which Peru owed freedom from Spain.

Discontent soon turned to active plotting. A conspiracy against Bolívar was unearthed at Lima—among those involved was Necochea, the brilliant leader of the cavalry at Junín. Infuriated, the Venezuelan declared he would clear out of Peru, bag and baggage. At that some of the natives, fearing a return of anarchy, begged him to stay. And Bolívar, immersed in the languorous life of Lima and La Magdalena, again put off his departure.

Now came disquieting news from the north.

Bolívar, reëlected President of Colombia, had again resigned, but again the Colombian Congress had refused to accept his resignation. So he was still President. Power in Colombia, however, continued to reside in the hands of Santander, the Vice-President at Bogotá, under

whom Páez the Centaur directed affairs in Venezuela.

Páez hated Santander. Always local-minded, never dreaming dreams such as had made Bolívar weld Venezuela, New Granada and Quito into one great whole, Páez was an apostle of "Venezuela for the Venezuelans." Why combine it with New Granada, filled with people who hated Venezuelans, whom Venezuelans hated?

His separatist tendencies heightened by his animosity toward Santander, Páez suddenly refused obedience to the Acting President at Bogotá and proclaimed himself Civil and Military Chief of Venezuela. He talked openly of the secession of Venezuela from New Granada. It looked as if the great triple republic, formed by the genius of Bolívar, was already in process of disintegration at the very beginning of its existence.

But Páez, though insubordinate to Santander, still deferred to Simon Bolívar. And Santander, ambitious though he was and no friend in his heart to the Liberator, was by no means prepared as yet to go forward entirely on his own. So both wrote to Bolívar, urging him in the most eloquent terms to hasten his departure from Peru and come north to restore order in the relations between New Granada and Venezuela.

Peruvian grumblings against him and his army had failed to turn him northward; now, however, the news from Carácas and Bogotá made him realize that his hour had struck in Peru.

In vain deputations of Peruvians, again fearing chaos in their country, besought him to remain; in vain crowds gathered, with bands of music, beneath his balcony; in vain ladies of Lima pressed upon him the necessity of staying. Peru even accepted the Bolivian Constitution

for herself and made Bolívar President of Peru for life. He accepted—but still he refused to remain.

"Colombia calls me, I must go," was his unvarying answer to all pleadings.

Early in September, 1826—exactly four years since his departure from Guayaquil to liberate Peru—Simon Bolívar, her liberator, left Peruvian soil, never to set foot on it again.

Taking ship at Callao, the last place in South America where Spaniards had held out against him, he turned toward Guayaquil, where he landed on the twelfth of September. Remaining only a few days—for he well knew the urgency of the crisis—he hurried forward to Quito. From there he continued to Pasto, where the monarchistic Pastusos lived now in growling allegiance to the Colombian Republic. Thence, by the arduous mountain route through Popayán and Neiva, traversed by him before at the head of the battalions destined to free Quito and Peru, he came to Bogotá. He reached it on the fourteenth of November, nearly two months from the start of his overland journey from Guayaquil. Even with no Spaniards to fight, travel was (and is) a thing of enormous difficulty in these regions of South America.

Santander greeted the Liberator with much outward show of cordiality. Confirming him as Vice-President in charge of the Presidency, Bolívar, though a rest would have been most welcome, pushed on indomitably toward Venezuela.

On the way he heard that actual civil war had broken out there between the adherents of the legitimate government, represented by Santander, and the malcontents headed by Páez. Bolívar pushed onward, resolved to

Francisco de Paula Santander, comrade and rival of Bolívar, at one time head of the government of New Granada, now the Republic of Colombia

bring Páez and his rebels to book—the great Republic of Colombia must be maintained intact! Toward the middle of December he crossed the Venezuelan boundary and reached the Venezuelan city of Maracaibo.

There he made preparations to advance still further into his native country, to put the issue if need be to the decision of actual battle, if the turbulent Centaur remained obdurate and disobedient. Before going forward, however, from Maracaibo, Bolívar dispatched his aide-de-camp, Diego Ybarra, with a conciliatory letter to Páez, in case the llanero chief should be averse to going to extremes and anxious to patch up matters.

But Páez stuck to his guns. Far from acknowledging Bolívar, President of Colombia, as his chief, the Centaur issued a proclamation boldly asserting that the Liberator had come to Venezuela not to punish him for his rebellion against the Colombian government but to give friendly advice in Páez's self-imposed mission of reforming the government of the land.

While Bolívar was thus cautiously feeling his way, afraid that Páez's authority in Venezuela had become such as to have undermined his own, Páez was actually quaking in his shoes. He had sense enough to see that, with the Liberator once more on Venezuelan soil, all his chief's old-time ascendancy, all the uncanny domination which he knew well how to assert over other men's minds, had returned to Venezuela with him.

From all sides Páez sensed the surge of Bolívar's magnetic influence; the air around him was electric with pro-Bolívarism; in trepidation, he felt the ebb of his own prestige, the dimming of his own effulgence. Páez, to be sure, was great in Venezuela, the memory of his

sensational exploits against the Spaniards was green—but Bolívar was greater, the memory of Carabobo and Boyacá and Ayacucho greener! The Centaur knew that he could not cope with Simon Bolívar; the old subserviency reasserted itself; once more it was as if, between the lines of Bolívar's conciliatory letters, the turbulent llanero could see the flashing eyes and hear the angry tones of that irresistible dominator of other men.

On the last day of 1826, Bolívar reached Puerto Cabello, scene of so many ups and downs in Venezuela's epic of independence. There—still unaware of the exact state of feeling in the land and still apprehensive of Páez's power—he issued a proclamation, again mild in tone, promising amnesty to all who had flouted the Colombian government, and assuring Páez that he was to remain in charge of Venezuelan affairs—under Santander, of course. To Mariño, skulking behind Páez and growling sedition against Bolívar, the Liberator gave similar reassurances.

There was to be no wreaking of vengeance—bygones were to be bygones. All he wanted, he proclaimed, was the return of law and order to Venezuela.

Páez received the proclamation in the spirit in which it had been written. He would show his chief that he, too, was capable of generosity, of forgetting the past. So, when Bolívar started from Puerto Cabello toward Valencia, where Páez had his headquarters, the Centaur set off to meet him.

They met at Naguanagua, about midway between the cities. No sign of hostility, no recriminations! Together they entered Valencia, acclaimed by the Valencians—

who now laid the emphasis of their fickle cheers on "Viva Bolívar!" not on "Viva Páez!"

But this surface crust of amity on which the two men were treading was too thin to stand very much. There was a banquet, of course, to celebrate the reconciliation, at which one of Páez's officers, heated with wine, ventured to laud extravagantly the prowess and power of the Centaur. Bolívar, enraged, leaped from his seat, shouting: "Here there is no authority equaling mine! I am the sun lending my lieutenants the light by which they shine!" For a moment it looked like serious trouble. Calm heads, however, averted it. Ostensibly the Liberator and the Centaur remained good friends.

On January 10, 1827, Bolívar again enters his native city of Carácas. He has not been there since just after his great victory at Carabobo in 1821, which gave liberty to Venezuela.

His fellow citizens receive him with enthusiasm and pomp. He makes his entry into the city amid squads of soldiery, and a crowd of people, who, forming in procession, escort him through the principal streets to the main plaza.

Bolívar, the central figure in the procession, walks under a canopy of honor, borne by leading Caraqueños. In the midst of all this ceremony and splendor, his roving eyes suddenly notice, in the multitude of humble people lining the path of the procession, the grinning features of Hipólita, his old negro mammy.

Rushing from under the gaudy canopy, pushing aside prominent citizens in his eagerness, Simon Bolívar, the

Liberator, the most famous man in all South America, stumbles toward the old negress, his eyes flashing with joy. She, murmuring incoherent endearments, shedding tears of delight, falls into the arms of her boy.

For a moment the procession stops. Then he resumes the place of honor under the canopy, and soldiers and civilians again take up their march.

This was the last time Simon Bolívar was destined to pass in life through the streets of the city where he had first drawn breath and seen light. The next time he came there was in a coffin, as a corpse, tardily reclaimed by his fellow citizens from a tomb in an alien land.

Trouble in the north had made the Liberator leave Peru; now trouble in the south, among the Peruvians, made him regretfully make up his mind to return to their land.

Some of the Colombian troops left by him in Lima had mutinied against their officers, demanding arrears of pay. The mutiny spread until it became a full-sized rebellion; within a short time after the disaffected soldiers had kindled the flame of revolt, the government of Peru, left behind by Bolívar when he turned his face northward, had been ousted and a new one set up in its place, under General La Mar, who had done such excellent work at Ayacucho. Bolívar shook his head sadly when the news was brought to him.

"Peru will fall back into anarchy!" he prophesied. Already he sensed the disintegration which was to come to the countries freed by him. He who had dreamed dreams of seeing those countries welded together in an alliance, based on mutual amity and giving strength and

prestige, had begun already to visualize what the future was really to bring—chaos, disunion, civil strife, derision from other nations. Already the foundations of La Gran Colombia were sinking. Peru was in disorder, Bolivia restive. As for the Congress of Panama—what was it to his contemporaries but a wild Bolivarian dream?

The shadows were falling. Yet Simon Bolívar remained indomitable.

Turning away from the pleasant life in his native city, he embarked at La Guaira on a British man-of-war, headed for Cartagena. As the vessel sped on its way westward, skirting the Venezuelan coast, he looked on that coast for the last time; never more was he to see the land which was the first of those freed by him, which was first always in his love. Even as he skirted Venezuela on his way to Cartagena, plots were being hatched by Venezuelans against him, plans were maturing which were to bar him forever from her shores.

From Cartagena he started via Ocaña—the town he had entered in triumph after the Magdalena campaign of his youth—for Bogotá. News from Peru was even more serious; the Lima revolt had spread northward to Guayaquil, in the territory of Quito. So, now, not only Peru but the third partner of Bolívar's triple republic of Great Colombia, was in disorder.

To make matters worse, Santander, at Bogotá, had been intriguing against his Venezuelan chief. Never his friend, the New Granadan Vice-President had been observing a line of conduct no better than that of Páez at Carácas. It is said indeed that Santander had his finger in the Peruvian troubles; be that as it may he had been

working toward the secession of New Granada from Venezuela, just as the Centaur had been trying to separate Venezuela from New Granada. Both these men, ostensibly friends of the Liberator, apparently at one with him in their views, were in reality digging at the foundations of La Gran Colombia, seeking to undermine the great monument to liberty erected by Bolívar in South America.

As Bolívar approached Bogotá Santander grew more and more worried. Had the Liberator got wind of his intrigues? Would he exact explanation, mete out summary punishment? For a while the New Granadan actually thought of open defiance—how about collecting troops and marching against Bolívar, barring his road to Bogotá, driving him back to the coast? But Santander's comrades in the government, even some of those tarred with the brush of intrigue, drew back in horror on the brink of such a course. Half-hearted plotting, with Bolívar far away, was one thing; to defy the victor of a dozen battles, on the battlefield, was quite another! Santander realized that to measure military strength with Bolívar would be hopeless.

Next he thought of flight. But, at the last moment, he decided to stay where he was, to meet Bolívar with the outstretched hand of friendship. After all, what had he done? How much did Bolívar know—or suspect? Still nervous, but resolved to stick it out, Santander sat down to wait. Some of his colleagues, less plucky, took to their heels. As Bolívar entered Bogotá by one gate, they left by another.

On September 10, 1827, the Liberator arrived. Santander received him with cordiality. Betraying no dis-

satisfaction either by word or gesture, Bolívar clasped the hand outstretched to him, returned the friendly embrace. That night he and Santander dined together. At the dinner they made preliminary plans for convoking a meeting of deputies from the various parts of Colombia. The place of meeting was to be Ocaña, the date early in the coming spring.

Meanwhile better news had come from the south. At Guayaquil a counter-revolution, headed by General Flores, had driven away the representatives of La Mar's Peruvian government and restored Colombian authority. One of those heading the rebels at Guayaquil, by the way, had been Luis López Méndez, the man who had lived so long in London and aided Bolívar so materially in the fight against Spain by enlisting for the Liberator's armies hundreds of English and other soldiers of fortune. Later, returning to South America, he had fallen out with Bolívar and joined the Peruvians plotting against him. Now, after a brief tenure of office at Guayaquil, he was flung back to Peru—whence he had bobbed up—by the pro-Bolívarites under Flores.

The good news from Guayaquil was all the more welcome to Bolívar because further disquieting reports had come from Venezuela, of a sort making it most inadvisable for him to continue his journey southward. A Spanish squadron had actually appeared off the Venezuelan coast, to give aid to some guerrilla forces which, under a Spaniard named Arizábalo, had risen in an effort to restore Spanish rule in Venezuela.

No wonder Bolívar was alarmed. Must he fight Spain all over again? Having once more obtained for himself unlimited military and civil powers in order to cope with

the new emergency, he started toward Venezuela to repel what he feared was to be another Spanish invasion comparable with the formidable expedition brought by Don Pablo Morillo ten years before.

Before he crossed from New Granada into Venezuela, however, he received reassuring messages from Páez. The Spanish squadron had appeared, to be sure, off the Venezuelan coast, but its commander had been unable to give the intended aid to Arizábalo, who was too harassed by the Venezuelans operating against him to get in touch with those aboard the Spanish ships. So they sailed away, leaving Arizábalo to his fate. He was soon disposed of—and Bolívar, far away on the New Granadan border, breathed a deep sigh of relief. Never again, in the years of life that remained to him, was he to be worried by Spain.

The Convention of deputies from the provinces of Colombia met at Ocaña early in March, 1828. At once it became apparent that the intrigues against Bolívar, so rife during his absence in Peru, had borne copious fruit. Everywhere the hand of Santander was to be felt —that hand which, outstretched in friendship whenever the two met, was all too prone to clench in enmity as soon as the Liberator's back was turned.

Santander himself acknowledged the uncanny effect on him of Bolívar's presence. "On innumerable occasions," he told friends, "I have gone up to him, my mind full of revengeful thoughts, yet the mere sight of him, the mere sound of his voice, has sufficed to disarm me and make me leave the room with nothing left in me but admiration for him. No man living can oppose Gen-

eral Bolívar face to face—and woe to him who dares try it!"

When not face to face with Bolívar, however, Santander was quite willing to try it. The foes of the Liberator, egged on by Santander from behind the scenes, began to come out into the open. They showed hostility to the idea of applying the Bolivian Constitution to Colombia—despite the desires of the man who had originated it. Nor was this all—there was talk of revision of the existing Colombian Constitution so as to make Colombia a Federal Republic. The local provincial governments were to be strengthened at the expense of the central government; indeed, the latter, if the would-be reformers had their way, was to be reduced well-nigh to impotence.

The real meaning of this sudden agitation for federalism was as plain as a pikestaff. It was intended as a slap in the face of Simon Bolívar. Every deputy at Ocaña knew Bolívar's aversion to the federal idea, his belief that the only government suitable to the infant republics of South America was a strongly centralized one, in which the man or men holding the executive power could act in emergencies without trammels from possibly well-meaning, but certainly hampering, legislatures.

Bolívar took the move for federation exactly as it was meant. Already he had presented to the Assembly his resignation as President. Now, in disgust at the turn affairs had taken, he drew aloof from the Assembly.

Alas! if only there were Spaniards to fight! Formerly, when disgusted with legislative bickerings and intrigues, he had simply clothed himself with supreme military

power, shaken the dust of legislative halls from his feet, and gone out to win another victory, confident that the added glory would suffice to make Congresses see things as he did. Now, however—no Morillo to defeat, no La Torre, no Canterac!—no towering Andean peaks to scale, no frozen páramos to cross! Instead, a lot of arguing, plotting, speech-making deputies, prodded and encouraged to beard him by false friends adroitly pulling unseen strings!

Always Bolívar had said: "I am a soldier!" Now he was learning the bitter lesson which many a victorious warrior had learned before him, which many another was to learn after he was in his grave: that, difficult as it is to win a battle against soldiers fighting in the open with arms in their hands, it may be still more difficult to win one against civilians, fighting from ambush, with invisible weapons.

After all sorts of quarrels, the Convention of Ocaña broke up without having accomplished much of anything. It adjourned without accepting Bolívar's resignation. He remained President of the triple republic of Colombia.

But his position was shaky.

In New Granada, Santander was, to all intents and purposes, his enemy, working almost openly for separating that land from the other two component parts of Colombia. In Venezuela Páez was quiet for the moment, but by no means to be trusted. He, too, had the separatist bee in his bonnet and was sure not to rest content until he had tried again to tear Venezuela away from the other two lands to which Bolívar had joined her. And in Quito, the third member of the tripartite republic,

trouble was also brewing. Soon that land also was to embark upon the turbulent waters of her destiny and brave their storms as an independent nation, under the name by which we of today know her—Ecuador.

After the fiasco of Ocaña, Bolívar returned to Bogotá. There Córdova, the fiery young hero of Ayacucho, backed by a number of other prominent New Granadans, begged him to make himself Dictator over Colombia. Things were going from bad to worse, they told him; anarchy was coming in giant strides; civil war was imminent, unless a strong man stepped in to guide the country. Everything pointed to Bolívar. The time was ripe for his iron hand. Thus argued Córdova and his friends; so eager were they that they rushed out to meet the Liberator, encountering him when he was still miles from Bogotá.

"Very well, Dictator let it be!" he agreed.

Once more his prestige carried all before it. Quito recognized the new dictatorship; at Carácas and other parts of his native country, Venezuelans also placed themselves at his service—even recalcitrants like Páez and Santiago Mariño.

For the moment Bolívar had ruined the intrigues of Santander, cast that personage into the shade. Indeed, so palpably was Santander's nose out of joint that he thought of leaving the country. Bolívar offered to make him Colombia's envoy to the United States. Seeing nothing for him at home, with Bolívar's fortunes taking such an upward turn, Santander said he was willing to go to Washington. But a further turn in Fortune's wheel kept him, after all, in New Granada.

Meanwhile Bolívar's most faithful lieutenant, the upright and magnanimous Sucre, was getting into hot water as President of far-away Bolivia. There, too, intrigue reared its head and foes plotted in the darkness. The Bolivians had begun to feel dislike toward Sucre because he was a foreigner. Their growing antipathy dimmed memories of how that foreigner, that Venezuelan, carrying to completion the plans of another foreigner, also a Venezuelan, had won the brilliant victory of Ayacucho and thereby made possible the independence of Bolivia. All that was now forgotten. The land named after the one Venezuelan, with a capital named after the other, now lumped the two in a common animosity—after all, they were "foreigners"!

The whole thing disgusted Sucre. Not for him internecine strife! Like Bolívar he also was more at home on a field of battle, sword unsheathed, fighting Spaniards! He, too, was prone to be sickened by long-winded orators in fickle legislatures!

In the midst of major worries, Sucre was also harassed by a minor one, the endeavor to smooth things over between the Bolivians and the eccentric Simon Rodríguez, the tutor of Bolívar in the days of his early youth.

After Rodríguez had joined his former pupil in Peru, at the urgent invitation of the latter, he accompanied him on his triumphal tour of the country, expounding to the Liberator, whenever he had an opportunity, the theories of education which were bubbling in his brain. For all his eccentricity, Rodríguez was able to maintain over the great South American general and statesman an intellectual ascendancy well-nigh as com-

plete as in the days when he and not Bolívar was the more important—when he was Simon Rodríguez, the savant, and the other merely his callow disciple. The upshot of Rodríguez's impassioned harangues on how youth should be educated to meet the problems of adult life was that Bolívar sent him to the new republic of Bolivia, in order that he might take charge of the schools there and apply his theories.

Unfortunately Rodríguez had no capacity for achieving practical results. He soon fell out with his associates, who complained of him to Sucre, the long-suffering President of the land. Sucre, in turn, transmitted their complaints to Bolívar, remembering that it was the Liberator who was responsible for Rodríguez's presence in Bolivia. Finally things got to so disagreeable a pass that the eccentric savant was relieved of his duties. In high dudgeon he resumed the wanderings in which he had spent so many years of his life, until at last, wearied by advancing years, he settled down in Chile, where he died at a ripe old age.

As for Sucre, he had made up his mind to shake the dust of Bolivia from his feet. Disheartened by constant bickerings with the natives of the new republic, the victor of Ayacucho resigned the Presidency of the land named for his Venezuelan chief, turned his back on its capital city named for himself, and hastened northward to rejoin Bolívar.

Days of disillusionment for Colombia's two compellers of victory! But days darker still were in store for both of them!

Chapter XX

"We have plowed in the sea!"

AT Bogotá hints of a plot for his assassination reached the ears of Bolívar. He set his subordinates on the track of the plotters, one of whom had approached an officer of the Bogotá garrison and sought to win him over to the conspiracy. Orders were promptly issued for the arrest of the would-be tempter. By a strange mischance, the orders were given to an officer who was himself one of the plotters.

He lost no time in warning his companions that the cat was out of the bag. They decided to strike quickly.

The original plan had been to murder Bolívar at a masked ball, but it had come to naught because he failed to put in an appearance. Thereupon they had chosen a second date, but it had been given up for one much later. Now, however, with evidence that Bolívar's officers were on the trail of the plot, those in it pulled themselves together for prompt and desperate measures. The conspirators, who for weeks had been holding secret nocturnal meetings, included a number of officers in the Colombian army—Carujo, López, Guerra, Silva, Galindo—also a Frenchman named Horment, and González, editor of a pro-Santander Bogotá newspaper. Santander himself always disclaimed connection with the plot, but there is good reason for believing that, even if not in it, he knew of its existence.

The plotters tried hard to win units of the garrison over to their side. They approached the officers of the veteran "Vargas" battalion, but in vain. Vargas, tested in many battles under Bolívar's orders, refused now to stab him in the back. With the small force of artillerymen stationed in the city, numbering some hundred and fifty, the conspirators had better luck. Dissatisfaction was rife there and a large proportion of its members lent a willing ear.

At half past eleven on the night of September 25, 1828, the plotters sallied forth to carry out their murderous intentions.

Bolívar, they had learned, was asleep at the Government Palace, on the main square of Bogotá. Thither Carujo, the chief plotter, hurried, with a few artillerymen and a small squad of cavalry won over by him and his colleagues. The palace guard was taken by surprise and easily overcome, several being killed in the midnight mêlée within the building. His men crowding behind him, Carujo rushed toward the room where Bolívar was supposed to be.

The Liberator was indeed there, with Manuelita Sáenz, his mistress. He had leaped up at the sound of fighting below, at the scuffling and hurried tread of men on the stairway, and, guessing correctly what was afoot, he had seized his sword and made ready to fight. But Manuelita dissuaded him. The heavy steps in the passage outside proved that the murderers were numerous; for Bolívar to resist them single-handed would be madness.

Already they had encountered Fergusson, an Irish aide-de-camp of Bolívar, whom Carujo had slain with

his own hand, and Andrés Ybarra, one of the Liberator's favorite aides, who, rushing out in his nightgown, sword in hand, to defend his chief, had been run through the arm by one of the conspirators, and left, drenched in blood, in the passage outside the room of his chief.

Carujo, pounding on the door of the room, shouted to those within to admit him. "What's the use of fighting them?" urged Manuelita, as Bolívar stood, half clothed, with drawn sword, ready to defend his life. "There are too many of them! Jump out the window!" Seeing the wisdom of her advice, the Liberator hurried to the window, which was only a few feet above the ground, scrambled outside it, and dropped cautiously to the pavement below. As soon as he had gone, Manuelita opened the door. Carujo and the others, with naked swords and cocked pistols, crowded into the room.

"Where is General Bolívar?" they asked.

The brave woman, who had left her English husband to follow Bolívar, held up a candle, looked at the tense faces of the armed men jostling and pushing about her.

"He is not here," she answered. Anything to gain time!

"Where is he?"

"At the Council Hall!"

Into her words she put the ring of sincerity. Besides, the gaze of the plotters had roved all over the room without finding a trace of the man they had come to murder. Angrily they looked into the eyes of Manuelita, angrily they questioned her further. But she stood, unmoved, in the half-dark room, refusing to be frightened by the scowls and curses of her questioners, by their unsheathed swords and wicked-looking pistols.

"I tell you, General Bolívar is at the Council Hall!" she told them, again and again.

At last Carujo and the others, reluctantly believing her, tumbled from the room, clattered down the stairs, dashed into the street, still bent on shedding the blood of the Liberator of their country. With a deep sigh of relief, Manuelita followed cautiously. Outside she found the wounded Andrés Ybarra, and told him how she had saved her lover.

By this time the crack of shots and the deep cursing of fighting men resounded from all over the city. While Carujo and his group were on their murderous errand at the palace, others of the plotters had crept up to the barracks housing the faithful Vargas battalion and launched a sudden attack on it. But the veterans of Vargas, still loyal, repelled the attack in short order, and, sallying from their barracks, roamed over the city, combating the plotters wherever they found a squad of them.

There were fights in a score of places; dead men of both sides lay in the roadways or on the sidewalks, their sightless eyes turned up to the dark heavens canopying the city.

One of the principal points in the conspirators' plan was to free Padilla, a Venezuelan general, who, after an excellent record in the service of the patriots, had recently led an unsuccessful rebellion against Bolívar at Cartagena. Padilla was now a prisoner at Bogotá. He was housed in a building not far from the center of the city, in the custody of Colonel José Bolívar, a kinsman of the Liberator.

A number of conspirators suddenly burst into the house, and, racing for the room where Padilla and his

guard were, excitedly told the prisoner that he was free. Padilla, leaping from bed, seized a pistol and, aiming it straight at Colonel Bolívar, who was but a few paces away, shot him dead. Hurriedly appropriating the dead man's sword, he then dashed into the street, with the intention of taking command of the uprising and pushing it to complete success.

Others, however, loyal to their chief, had forestalled him.

The Venezuelan veteran, Urdaneta, whose mettle Bolívar had proved on a dozen campaigns, was also bestirring himself. Hurrying to the barracks of the Vargas battalion, Urdaneta lined up all of its men still there and, taking command of them, headed them at the double-quick toward the Government Palace, where he supposed Bolívar was. As the faithful soldiers, Urdaneta in the lead, hurried toward the main square of the city, they were joined by other loyal comrades of the Liberator, wild with excitement and apprehension, eagerly asking each other "Where is he?" "Is he dead?" Córdova, hero of Ayacucho, was one of them, and Colonel Paris, veteran of many battles, and Herrán, one of the most prominent leaders among the Bogotanos. In the wake of Urdaneta and his soldiers, they rushed into the palace, surged up the stairs, stumbled over the dead body of Fergusson, met the pale and blood-stained Andrés Ybarra, and the plucky Manuelita.

"Where is he? Where is General Bolívar? Is he alive? Is he dead?" Talking all together, brandishing their swords, gripping pistol-butts with tense fingers, Urdaneta and the others crowd around Manuelita.

"He escaped!"

"Thank God!"

Again they pound down the stairs, run into the street, scatter right and left in search of the Liberator. Shots still sound here and there. Fighting is still in progress. But the back of the conspiracy has been broken; everywhere the forces of the government have got the better of the would-be murderers.

And what of Simon Bolívar?

Having dropped from the window of his bedroom into a deserted street, he had made off in the darkness, his mind in confusion, not rightly knowing which direction to take or what to do. He heard shots from all sides —who was winning, he wondered?—friends or foes? —those seeking to murder him?

He decided to make for the barracks of the Vargas battalion, but, on the way, the shots redoubled, the shouts of angry combatants grew louder. Had Vargas turned traitor? Or, if still loyal, was it not too sore beset to offer him protection?

Utterly bewildered, Bolívar came to a bridge spanning a shallow ravine near the center of Bogotá. He was alone, unarmed, at the mercy of the first conspirator who might chance to meet him. No time for bravado! Scrambling over the parapet of the bridge, he hid himself beneath it—safe for the time being, at least.

Overhead the sounds of fighting continued. On the bridge, above his hiding-place, men dashed to and fro —excited voices rang out—and shots, shots, more shots.

At last, listening intently, he heard voices calling: "General Bolívar! Where are you, General! Come to us! We are your friends!"

Convinced, eventually, that the voices came really

from men loyal to him, Bolívar emerged from his hiding-place, scrambled back onto the bridge. Wild-eyed, dusty, perspiring, coatless, his shirt torn, his trousers gripped in one nervous hand, he suddenly confronted a group of the men who had been shouting for him.

They were soldiers of the Vargas battalion. Instantly they recognized him. Mad with relief and delight, they crowded around, their officers grasped his hand, excitedly they questioned him as to his escape and subsequent adventures. In a jostling, gesticulating, tumultuous group they hastened toward the palace.

There Simon Bolívar, pushing everyone aside, rushed forward, hand outstretched, to grasp the hand of Manuelita and throw his arm around her. In the room, in the passage outside, in the street before the palace, hundreds of people, delirious with joy, were yelling:

"Viva el Libertador!" Bolívar pointed to Manuelita:

"Viva la Libertadora del Libertador!" he cried. "Long live the Liberatress of the Liberator!"

Punishment swift and summary befell the conspirators. Among the first to be arrested was Santander. Suspicion gathered darkly about the man who, only too often, had shown hostility toward the Liberator. Among the plotters were men known to be his close friends—it seemed impossible that Santander could have remained in ignorance of the foul work afoot. Ardent partisans of Bolívar, with the shock of the attempted assassination of their idol still fresh upon them, were convinced that the Vice-President was guilty and

they were clamorous for vengeance. Things looked black for him.

A tribunal was hastily formed and Santander was haled before it. He vehemently protested his innocence. Despite his protestations, the members of the court found him guilty—not of actual participation in the murderous plot but of having instigated and abetted the participants. He was sentenced to death.

Bolívar, however—reversing the course followed by him when Piar lay in the shadow of execution at Angostura—commuted the sentence to exile. Santander was taken to Cartagena; after several months of imprisonment there, he was sent to foreign parts. Throughout he continued to plead his innocence of the charges against him.

Carujo, strange to relate—the man who had murdered Fergusson and led the conspirators into Bolívar's bedroom—was pardoned. Others were less lucky. Fourteen of them—Padilla, the Frenchman Horment, and twelve Colombian officers and soldiers—were sentenced to be shot.

Five faced the firing squad on September 30, five days after they had tried to kill Bolívar. Three days later Padilla perished. The last batch of those sentenced to death were executed some days later.

Before the year was out, Bolívar, scarcely recovered from his narrow escape from assassination, was confronted with another lot of bad news from the south. In Peru, La Mar, always hostile enough, was now in open rebellion. In Popayán, the important New Gra-

nadan city between Bogotá and Quito, Obando and López, local leaders, had risen against the Colombian government.

It behooved Bolívar to get on the march again. But this time—alas!—it was not against soldiers of Spain. Instead, he must lead South Americans against South Americans, take a hand in civil war. Reluctantly, he placed himself at the head of a body of troops and set out toward Popayán.

But he was another Simon Bolívar! Gone was the vigor of yesteryear, gone the imperviousness to fatigue, the determination which gave to his thin frame the endurance of a Spartan. Shaken by years of battling and governing, weakened by gay living, under the mental shock of his recent escape from assassination, he was no longer the Simon Bolívar of the campaigns on the Venezuelan llanos, of the march across the Andes, of the audacious incursions into Quito and Peru. Though just turned forty, he was an old man; he who could outdo anyone in braving hardship and hunger now became weary after an hour or two in the saddle. Symptoms of disease, ignored before in favor of the exacting duties of generalship and statesmanship, were becoming steadily more alarming.

He was a sick man; already the shadow of death was closing in upon him, the specter of the tomb rising grimly before his eyes.

Yet, even now, he refused to give in. The fire of his superb courage still warmed his thinning blood. Work to be done, fights to be fought! Onward to Popayán! Again he climbed wearily into the saddle.

Before marching against the rebels, he had sent his faithful Venezuelan coadjutor, Sucre, and his faithful Irish aide, O'Leary, to try to prevail upon La Mar to compromise without bringing matters to actual battle. But both the Venezuelan and the Irishman failed. La Mar was on his high horse, drunk with overvaulting ambition: there was nothing for it but to knuckle down to him tamely, or give him the fight he wanted. So Bolívar, once more driven to civil war within the borders of the lands he had liberated, commanded Sucre to collect an army and bring La Mar to book. Meanwhile, he himself advanced toward Popayán.

Sucre lost no time in accomplishing his task—in proving that his hand had lost none of the wizardry evidenced at Pichincha and Ayacucho. The audacious La Mar, marching beyond the border between Peru and the old Spanish domain of Quito, had occupied Guayaquil and advanced as far as Loja. With him were 8,400 men —a goodly force in the South America of those days. Against them Sucre could bring only 6,000, but the military prowess of the victor of Ayacucho sufficed to offset the lack of many battalions and squadrons.

Bolívar had enjoined upon his lieutenant to avoid a pitched battle if possible—he still felt horror at the idea of blood shed in civil war. But Sucre was unable to avoid it. La Mar was upon him before he could maneuver his forces out of the way. Driven to the necessity of fighting, the hero of Ayacucho lived up to the splendid laurels which he had won against the soldiers of the last of the Spanish viceroys. After a furious fight, on the field of Tarqui, in which he displayed all his

old-time skill, decision and gallantry, Sucre totally routed the superior forces of La Mar. They were driven back in wild disorder, losing 2,500 men.

A couple of weeks after his defeat at Tarqui, La Mar signed a treaty, agreeing to evacuate Guayaquil and pay an indemnity. Once more had Antonio José Sucre done brilliant work in fulfilment of Simon Bolívar's orders. Well might the Liberator sigh for many more such lieutenants—for one such in place of Páez, in lieu of Santander! But fate had only one Sucre for him.

While La Mar was being crushed, Bolívar himself was busy bringing Obando and López to their knees. The task was not a long one—the rebels of Popayán were no match for South America's Man of Destiny. They soon sued for terms. Thereupon Bolívar returned to Bogotá.

But he had not heard the last of La Mar. Sound as had been the drubbing administered to him, the troublesome Peruvian was soon at his old tricks. It became apparent that he was not faithfully carrying out the terms of the treaty imposed upon him by Sucre. He had agreed to evacuate Guayaquil, but days went by and still he and his men remained there.

Bolívar decided to handle La Mar himself. Again overcoming his increasing weariness and ill health, with all the indomitable pluck which had brought him successfully through one arduous campaign after another, he hurried southward until he was at the very gates of Guayaquil.

He was saved the trouble, however, of punishing La Mar. Another Peruvian, Gamarra, obligingly rose against his fellow countryman, deposed him from the

Presidency of Peru, and shipped him off to Central America, where he died, an exile, shortly afterward. Then Gamarra, who had no desire whatever to pit himself in battle against Simon Bolívar, hastened to come to terms with that indignant commander. A treaty was promptly signed, whereby Gamarra agreed to withdraw all the Peruvian troops in Guayaquil.

Once more there was peace between the northern and southern parts of the enormous territory to which Simon Bolívar had brought independence. But in both there was animosity against him; in both the rats of disruption were steadily gnawing; in both forces too strong even for his inflexible strength were massing for his destruction.

And, while the rats were gnawing and his foes massing, Bolívar lay deathly ill at Guayaquil. In fact, he almost died—mayhap it would have been better for him if he had! The iron strength which, allied to his iron will, had made him bear incredible suffering and endure hardships seemingly beyond human endurance, was sagging and cracking; even the iron will, pitted so long against the intrigues and ingratitude of those whom he had deemed friends, was showing signs of strain. For the first time hints of despair began to crop out in him. In letters to friends the note of utter weariness, of disillusionment too profound to allow of further effort, sounded more and more clearly.

The brave heart of the Liberator was close to breaking. Bitterness began more and more to encompass and darken his remaining days.

In an agony of disillusionment he wrote:

"Those who have toiled for liberty in South America

have plowed in the sea!" Anon, his bitterness taking an even more cynical turn, he told a friend:

"The greatest mischief-makers ever known have been Jesus Christ, Don Quixote and myself!"

There seemed no end to the savage blows which fate now aimed at him.

Already Páez had rebelled, already Santander had plotted against him, already La Mar had sought to rob him of the fruits of his victories in the south. Now another of the heroes of his wars to bring independence to Spanish America let ambition get the better of loyalty.

Córdova, the youthful leader of that superb charge at Ayacucho, the man in whom the frenzy of battle had bred words that have remained ever since a classic of South American schoolboys, rose in revolt. Heavy at heart, Bolívar picked up the gauntlet. Against Córdova he sent his devoted Irishman, Daniel O'Leary. Bolívar knew O'Leary's fidelity as an aide; now he would test his mettle as a general.

The Irishman proved himself worthy of his chief's confidence. Overtaking Córdova in the mountains south of Bogotá, he won a clean-cut victory. Córdova's force was cut to pieces and Córdova himself, cornered in a house near the field of battle, was killed. Such was the inglorious end of the man who electrified his soldiers with the glorious order "Step of Conquerors!"

In the first month of 1829, Bolívar was back at Bogotá. When the Colombian Congress met a few days after his arrival, he again tendered his resignation of the Presidency of the triple republic.

Ever bitterer grew his utterances; ever deeper was he sinking into the waters of disillusionment.

"All we have gained is independence and we have gained it at the cost of everything else!" he exclaimed.

From Venezuela now came news that seemed like nails being driven into his coffin. Páez the Centaur, flinging all subterfuge to the winds, had once more rebelled against the Colombian government and definitely declared that Venezuela had severed her connection with Colombia and would henceforth exist as an independent nation. This time the Centaur openly defied Bolívar; he told his chief in the plainest of language that, if he dared set foot on Venezuelan soil, he would be turned back as an enemy of Venezuela.

Bolívar soon had occasion to test the sincerity of Páez's words. Envoys sent by him to reason with the rebellious llanero were summarily stopped as soon as they had crossed the boundary between New Granada and Venezuela and forced to an ignominious right-about.

In the land of his birth, in the land which was the first to receive freedom as a gift from him, Simon Bolívar was proscribed, his authority flouted, his name anathema among many of his fickle-hearted fellow countrymen. There, indeed, he had "plowed in the sea." And the despair which from now on settled ever more thickly upon him proved that Venezuela's treatment of him was cutting him to his very heart.

In a last flare-up of his magnificent courage, he thought of entering Venezuela, of putting his extraordinary prestige and power over other men once more to the test. Only for a moment!—his old-time courage

was ebbing, along with his health. Dim was the glance which had again and again cowed angry men, unused to domination, and made them bow in a subservience they themselves could not analyze; gone was the flash of those deep-set black eyes, inert the arm which had so often backed that flash with imperious gestures of command.

As his health ebbed, as his courage sagged, Simon Bolívar saw the lands to which he had brought independence relapsing into disunion and chaos. Already Venezuela had been hewn loose from Colombia by the recreant Centaur; already, in the south, Quito was about to secede; already, in New Granada, the forces of secession were far stronger than any centripetal force that might wish to perpetuate the magnificent temple erected by Bolívar to the goddess of liberty.

Simon Bolívar was a dying man, his life-work a dying thing.

In despair, he pressed the Colombian Congress for acceptance of his resignation. To the honor of that body, they at first refused. This time, however, he was not playing to the gallery, not resigning in the expectancy of continuing in power.

The hand of death was chilling him to the marrow; quiet he must have, at any price, for his few remaining days. So he made it clear to the Congressmen that he was in earnest, and they, in their turn, took him at his word. He handed over the executive power to General Caicedo; in an election held in May, 1830, General Mosquera was made President and Caicedo Vice-President. Their authority extended now only over New Granada—for Venezuela had made good her secession

and, in the very month of their election, Flores, in the south, proclaimed the secession of Quito and her entry into the family of nations under the name of Ecuador. The great republic of Colombia, the vision of which had shone gloriously in Bolívar's dreams, making him forget exile and want, defeat and despair, was now crushed beyond hope of resuscitation.

Chapter XXI

curtain!

SIMON BOLÍVAR was now no longer Dictator-President of Colombia, no longer President of Peru or of Bolivia, no longer general-in-chief of armies marching to create new nations in the New World. He was simply a citizen of Venezuela, and that land, having broken away from the great triple Republic of Colombia, established by him on the ruins of Spain's South American Empire, now spurned him and forbade him to set foot on her soil.

When he turned over the Presidency and walked out of the Presidential Palace at Bogotá as an ordinary citizen, he was not only ill and dejected but well-nigh penniless. Years before, at the outset of his career, the Spaniards had seized much of his rich property in Venezuela. As early as 1813, after the collapse of Miranda's First Venezuelan Republic, Monteverde, Miranda's conqueror, had seen to it that Simon Bolívar, arrogant young patrician of Carácas, should pay dearly for bearding Spain. Bolívar reached Curaçao, in that year, almost reduced to beggary, because Monteverde had lost no time in confiscating as much of the Bolívar estates, slaves and cash as he could lay hands on. To make matters worse, the British authorities at Curaçao had seized the young man's baggage, owing to some

irregularity in his papers, and in that baggage was a goodly sum of money. But he, who all his life despised wealth, hurried away to Cartagena to embark on the reconquest of Venezuela from the Spaniards, without bothering to make the British restore what they had confiscated. At Cartagena he was almost entirely dependent on his pay as an officer in the patriot forces.

In subsequent years large sums came to him as a reward for his extraordinary services in the cause of liberty. But his contempt for money never abated; the greater the amount accruing to him, the greater his craving to throw it away. Out of his own pocket he paid numerous pensions to officers' dependents; with those about him he was mad in his lavishness; nobody in his favor ever asked vainly for a loan. He spent recklessly, never stopping to ask what a desired thing might cost him.

No longer President, no longer in receipt of his official salary and other emoluments, having given to friends and charity and all sorts of worthy causes nearly every penny of the sums voted to him by grateful Congresses as special rewards, Simon Bolívar was now reduced to actual want.

Repairing from Bogotá to a small town in the hills of New Granada, in the hope of repairing his shattered health, he spent little by little the meager amount of money he had brought with him into retirement. Yet poverty, though growing every day more serious, failed to teach him thrift. Still he handed out coins right and left. For the smallest service he would give outrageous tips to servitors; even now he spent without a thought of the morrow. The result was that, when he reached Car-

tagena, whence he had decided to depart for foreign shores, he had scarcely a dollar in his pocket.

Realizing at last the seriousness of his situation he bethought him that, at home in Venezuela, members of his family might have recovered some of the Bolívar estates now that the Spaniards had been driven away. So he wrote to a cousin asking him to raise some funds by selling whatever Venezuelan property was still available.

Meanwhile, his dejection grew steadily deeper. Every report he received from the lands he had liberated bore out the truth of his despairing words, "Those who worked for South American freedom have plowed in the sea!"

Everywhere the common welfare was being sacrificed to personal ambitions. Each leader pursued his own unscrupulous ends without regard to his country. South America's long history of turbulence, instability and bloodshed was beginning. Nobody had a thought any more for La Gran Colombia; they had not even waited for Simon Bolívar's death to tear it to pieces.

As for the Constitution drafted by him for Bolivia, the land named for him—which, he had hoped, would be adopted throughout the vast territory freed by him —Bolivia was already raising objections to it, Peru had adopted it only to cast it aside, Ecuador and New Granada and Venezuela would have none of it.

And the Congress of Panama?—that splendid vision which had come to him of a League of American Nations banded together for mutual welfare, for exchange of constructive ideas between the free republics of the American continent, a League destined to make the Old

World respect the New and the New respect itself—what of the congress of Panama? Dead at birth! Laughed at, spurned, by those whom it was to protect, as the insane dream of a lunatic!

"I have plowed in the sea!" Well might Simon Bolívar, in the black bitterness of disillusionment, repeat over and over again those words.

In the midst of his worst disappointments, in the midst of the unexpected defections of trusted friends, he had continued to love and admire one man, and that one man had continued, through thick and thin, to merit Simon Bolívar's love and admiration! Antonio José Sucre! Upright and chivalrous gentleman to the end, Sucre remained as staunch a friend to Bolívar in adversity as when, entrusted with the supreme command of the army of liberation, he had stood, victorious, on the field of Ayacucho, dictating terms of surrender to the last of Spain's Viceroys in South America. In his letters to Sucre Bolívar poured out his heart. The confidence between the two men was unlimited. Neither hid a thought from the other.

And now Fate struck Bolívar one of her hardest blows. As he lay, ill and dispirited, at Cartagena, desirous of leaving the land which had spurned him and ending his days in poverty and exile, there came to him a piece of news that caused him to bow his head in the last extremity of despair.

Sucre had been assassinated!

On his return from a mission in the south, while passing through the wild region in the neighborhood of the old royalist stronghold of Pasto, plotters against the government had laid an ambush for the hero of Aya-

cucho. Riding, all unsuspecting, along an arduous mountain trail, he had suddenly been fired at from behind a clump of trees. He fell from his horse, mortally wounded; in a few minutes he was dead. Those with him tried to capture his assassins, but in vain. The wild nature of the countryside was altogether too much in the favor of those who had fired the shots. They vanished completely—nor were the actual murderers or those who had instigated them ever brought to book.

When he read the news of Sucre's death, it seemed to Bolívar that he himself had been stabbed to the heart. Turning to those about him, he exclaimed:

"My God! They have killed Abel!"

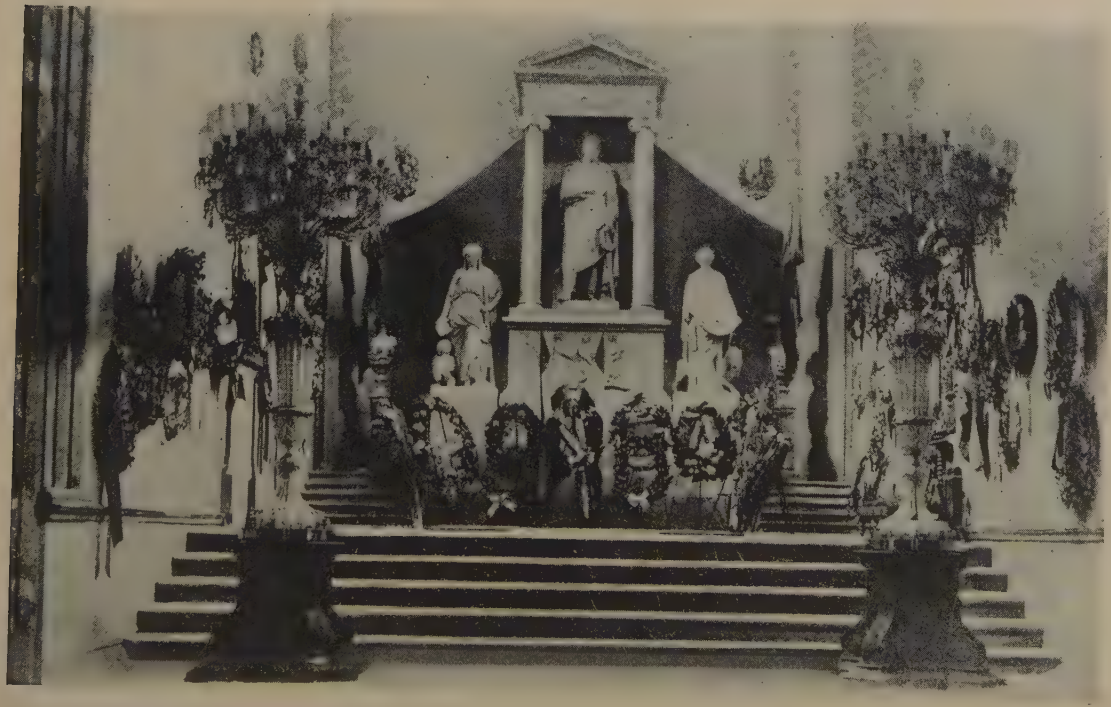
Disintegration progressed apace in the territory of what had been La Gran Colombia. At Bogotá a revolt unseated President Mosquera; at Cartagena itself another revolt broke out. The rebels at the latter city urged Bolívar to take command.

The request tempted him. For a while Bolívar the Warrior and Bolívar the Statesman lifted up their heads, scenting opportunity for more achievements.

Only for a moment! "The flame has consumed the oil!" It did not take the Liberator long to realize that the state of his health utterly forbade further effort.

Before reaching Cartagena he had caught a cold. With his usual recklessness, he had neglected it. The cold had grown worse, it had reached his lungs, turned to consumption.

Simon Bolívar was slowly dying. In a letter to a friend, who urged him to cheer up and resume his active life, he wrote:



Tomb of Simon Bolívar in the Pantheon at Carácas, Venezuela. It was designed by the Italian sculptor Tenerani

"I have scarcely breath enough left for the few last days remaining to me!"

December, 1830,

Vainly searching for health—panting, coughing, spitting blood—Simon Bolívar drags his weary steps to the port of Santa Marta, on the Caribbean coast of New Granada. There, he knows, the climate is better than at Cartagena. It may help him.

He makes the journey by water. So weak is he when the vessel reaches Santa Marta that he has to be carried ashore. Still there are a few loyal friends with him —General Montilla, General Silva, Andrés Ybarra, the aide wounded at Bogotá by Bolívar's would-be assassins; and a few more. Señor Mier, a resident of Santa Marta, enrolls himself among the last men loyal to the Liberator by offering him hospitality at his country place, San Pedro Alejandrino, just outside Santa Marta.

It soon becomes clear to those around him that the Liberator's days are numbered. In haste they summon physicians—Dr. Révérend, a Frenchman settled at Santa Marta, and the surgeon of a United States gunboat that happens to be in the harbor. The two examine the patient, look at each other, gravely shake their heads.

"Send for a priest!"

On the tenth of December the last rites of the Roman Catholic Church are administered to Simon Bolívar. He lies on his bed, or propped up in a chair, now listless, now with his brain spurred to feverish activity. He is deathly white, his frame, never more than puny, has wasted almost to a skeleton. An old, broken man—yet, in age, only forty-seven!

The tireless brain still functions—again and again he addresses those about him.

"What brought you to America?" he suddenly asks the French doctor.

"The wish to find liberty."

"Did you find it?"

"Yes, General."

"You have been more fortunate than I, Doctor! So far I have not found liberty!"

One day, feeling better, he dictates a farewell to the citizens of the republics to which he has brought independence. Faithful friends, having written down his words, gather around the dying man; one of them reads aloud what he has dictated. The last words are: "If my death should bring union, I shall go down, with a tranquil mind, to my grave!"

Bolívar listens, hollow-cheeked, sunken-eyed, huddled together in an armchair. At first he shows no emotion. But when he hears the words "my grave" he suddenly cries, in tones of ghastly hoarseness:

"Yes, my grave! That is what my fellow citizens have presented to me! But I forgive them! If only I might carry to the grave with me the consolation of knowing they are united!"

The seventeenth of December.

"How is the Liberator?" asks General Montilla of Dr. Révérend.

"I do not think he will live through the day."

Silent and tearful, some of the dying man's friends gather around his bed. He is already delirious. Toward noon the doctor sees that the end is a question of minutes.

Going to each of Bolívar's friends, scattered about in the villa of Señor Mier, the Frenchman tells them:

"Gentlemen, if you wish to witness the Liberator's last moments of life, make haste!"

All crowd around the death-bed.

Simon Bolívar lies in his death agony. At one o'clock he draws his last breath.

When Dr. Révérend, asked by Bolívar's friends to lay out the corpse, begins his sad task he finds that the nightshirt which the Liberator was wearing when he died is torn. The Frenchman is beside himself with indignation. He exclaims:

"Not even as a corpse will I allow Simon Bolívar to wear a torn garment! If there is not a better one for him here, I shall send to my house for one of my own!" General Silva, one of the friends who had stood by the death-bed, hurries to his room, returns, in a few minutes, with another nightshirt. In that garment Dr. Révérend lays out the corpse.

Thus died Simon Bolívar the Liberator—the man who freed four countries and founded a fifth, the victor in a score of furious battles, whose exploits had made him famous all over the universe and brought him a place of honor, rivaled by few, in the august list of the apostles of liberty—in exile, under an alien roof, clad in a borrowed nightshirt.

EPILOGUE

AMERICA, as Simon Bolívar visualized it—united in amity and power—was not to be. His dream of an American League of Nations has never become reality. His glorious vision of an American Geneva on the Isthmus of Panama, a meeting-place for the representatives of free American countries, gathered together to discuss, in all freedom, matters of common interest, has failed to materialize in the century that has elapsed since his death.

The nations which he did succeed in welding together, and which fell apart in discord even before he had closed his weary eyes, have remained, ever since, disunited and alien. Nor have any other lasting unions of Latin-American nations sprung into being during those hundred years.

Communication between the lands to which he brought independence is as difficult today as when he marched his soldiers across the Andes. Not even now is there any overland highway connecting his native Venezuela with what used to be New Granada and is now Colombia, nor the latter with what he knew as Quito and is now called Ecuador, nor Ecuador with Peru and Bolivia. Only in that part of the vast South American continent which echoed to the tread of the soldiers of Bolívar's great contemporary, San Martín, are there railways and roads joining each country to its neighbors. Over the Southern Andes, surmounted more than a century ago by San

Martín, trains and motor cars now run linking up the two republics brought into being by his military prowess.

But, amid the desolate Andean wastes between Venezuela and New Granada, the stillness is not broken even to this day by the whistle of a locomotive or the horn of an automobile. The ice-coated páramos still rear themselves in antagonism to human transit as grimly as when they confronted and well-nigh thwarted Bolívar's great mountain march of 1819.

Disunion—anarchy—civil strife—governmental corruption—all these have been but too rife in the lands which Simon Bolívar for a brief space welded into one, and in the others which he visualized as self-respecting and respected members of United Pan-America.

When exiled on the island of Jamaica, he phophesied that, until South Americans acquired talents and political virtues like those of the North Americans, genuine democracies would be impossible in South America. These talents and virtues having remained unacquired by the majority of the inhabitants of Latin-American republics, their history has been largely a melancholy succession of violent political upheavals, all too often of bloody internecine warfare. Within the last century a few among them, having sought to adapt themselves intelligently to the march of progress, have risen to high rank among democracies. Argentina is one of these, Chile another. But, with most of the rest it is as Simon Bolívar, the prophet of a century ago foresaw.

His grandiose project of a Pan-American Congress "to deal with and discuss the high interests of peace and war" was always in his mind as one of the splendid possibilities of the future. Nor did it remain merely a

dream, as we have seen. Bolívar worked actively to make it reality. If that reality was too good for mankind, should the blame fall on him? Something dimly resembling the realization of his dream has indeed come to pass in the Pan-American Congress. Its every meeting is a tribute to his prescience.

"America demands the creation of seventeen nations," he said. Taking "America" to have meant, in his mind, Latin America, this prophecy has come to pass with astonishing exactitude. Counting as one nation the South American lands temporarily joined by him, the total would indeed be seventeen, viz:

1. Mexico
2. Guatemala
3. Honduras
4. San Salvador
5. Nicaragua
6. Costa Rica
7. Colombia (including, as it did toward the end of Bolívar's life, what we now call Colombia, Panama, Venezuela and Ecuador)
8. Peru
9. Bolivia
10. Chile
11. Argentina
12. Uruguay
13. Paraguay
14. Brazil
15. Haiti
16. Santo Domingo
17. Cuba.

From the component parts of Bolívar's Colombia four free republics have been formed—Colombia, Panama, Venezuela, Ecuador. Thus, instead of the seventeen free countries visualized by him, there are, in reality, twenty. When he made his prophecy in 1816, there was not one! Various republican governments, formed in defiance of Spain, were desperately trying to keep the lands they governed from being reduced again to the status of Spanish colonies.

An astonishing prophecy, verily!—alike for its audacity and its accuracy!

"I do not believe in having American monarchies," he said. Well, there are none.

"It is well-nigh inevitable that monarchies will be established. "It will not be easy to consolidate a great monarchy." Right again. In Mexico two emperors reigned, Iturbide and Maximilian. Both expiated their rashness before firing squads. Mexico—turbulent and unstable though she is—remains, nevertheless, a republic.

Brazil had an emperor until far into the nineteenth century; now, however a president heads the Brazilian government. Haiti once bowed before a dusky monarch, but there, as well, monarchy has disappeared.

Despotism may still exist in Latin America, the name "republic" may be but too often a mockery when applied to the régime under which many Latin-Americans live, yet the fact remains that monarchy has never taken root on American soil.

To us of today this seems quite natural. But when Simon Bolívar was fighting what often seemed a losing fight against the proud monarchy of Spain, intent on

reënslaving her rebellious colonies, the vision of an America, composed practically in its entirety of free republics, was something calculated to arouse in "thinking" people nothing but amazement and derision.

Yet Simon Bolívar saw that vision!

No one man could bring into being the United America, founded on the splendid international ideals which shone brightly in his dreams, and few men are endowed with the sort of soul to make even dreaming such a thing possible. Simon Bolívar had such a soul. His dreams may have been extravagant, but they were glorious; they may have been mad, but they were beautiful.

Before he died he knew that what he had dreamed could not become fact. Long before he lay on his melancholy death-bed at Santa Marta he knew that the superb dream-structure which, throughout his life, had shimmered in glory before his eyes, was a thing of air and illusion and evanescence.

"I have plowed in the sea!"

Simon Bolívar was a dreamer in his youth and in his maturity, in poverty and in prosperity, in misfortune and in power; all his life he nourished himself on dreams and he lived long enough to know that his dreams were only dreams.

But—*he dreamed!* All honor to him!

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